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SEVEN TIMES THREE.

BY JEAN INGELOW.

I leaned out of window, I smelt the white clover,
Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate
"Now, if there be footsteps, he comes, my one lover—
Hush, nightingale, hush! O, sweet nightingale, wait
Till I listen and hear
If a step draweth near,
For my love he is late!

"The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
A cluster of stars hangs like fruit in the tree,
The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer,
To what art thou listening, and what dost thou see?
Let the star-clusters grow,
Let the sweet waters flow,
And cross quickly to me.

"You night moths that hover where honey brims over
From sycamore blossoms, or settle or sleep;
You glow-worms, shine out, and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.
Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep—

"Too deep for swift telling; and yet, my one lover,
I've conned thee an answer, it waits thee to-night."
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took flight;
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

DOUBLE CUNNING.

The Tale of a Transparent Mystery.

BY GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER VII.

BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

ARTHUR RANGE made the most of his time in London before going to Helmthorpe.

"Better come down with us, Mr. Range," Sir Harry said, warmly, and Lady Fanshaw added her persuasions. "You are a stranger, and I don't want to hear that you have got into any trouble."

"Trouble, Sir Harry?"

"Well, had any of our clever swindlers on your track."

"Oh, I can take care of myself," said Range, confidently.

"That's what we all say, my dear sir, and then we read every day that some self-confident person has been cheated by the most trivial and stale of tricks. Ah, well! I can remember my own feelings when I saw London for the first time. Go and drink your fill of sights and sounds, and then come and see our quiet country home. My brother will be with us by then."

They parted with Range undertaking to be with them in a fortnight, and he went to his hotel.

"I felt horribly guilty after I had said I could take care of myself," with a half laugh. "I wonder what has become of my American friend and his fair sister."

Range did as most strangers do who visit London for the first time; he saw the principal buildings and sights, and concluded that the greatest sight of all was the street, with its hurrying crowds intent on pleasure, toil, or nothing at all.

There was always something to interest him, and to enjoy to the full his favorite station was the knife-board of some omnibus, from whence he could survey the metropolis from Chelsea to Wapping, from Islington to Camberwell, and then try omnibuses that took him north-west, south-east, and to the other points of the compass.

More than one vulture had marked him out for prey, but without effect, and he spent his days in the streets, seeing all he could.

Covent Garden was handy to his hotel, and after seeing it by day a visitor at the hotel whom he encountered in the central avenue asked him if he had seen it in the very early morning, when carts and vans were bringing in the day's supplies.

The hint was enough.

The next morning he was in the busy crowd, thoroughly enjoying the bustle and excitement of the distribution of vegetables, fruit, and flowers, till, turning to go, with an inward monitor that was not conscience bidding him remember the truth of the French proverb, *Il faut manger* he saw something that took his attention at once.

It was only a man stepping out of a public-house—a sight he had seen thousands of times.

It was the man who took his attention as he hastily brushed his lips with the worn, black kid gloves he carried in his white hand.

Their eyes met, and Range was conscious of a stare that became an angry frown as the man turned sharply round and walked away in the direction of Drury Lane Theatre.

"Parson," said Range to himself, as he looked after the departing figure in shabby black, and wearing a dilapidated Inverness cape.

His tall hat was battered and unbrushed; so was his hair.

His boots were gaping at the sides; round his neck there was the sign of his order, a white tie; but its aspect seemed to say that that order had been dragged and trailed in the dust.

His face endorsed this suggestion, and it was the face that had taken Range's attention.

It was that of a young man of seven or eight-and-twenty, pale, with sunken cheeks and curious careworn lines about the corners of the dark-circled eyes. Not a bad face at all.

There was none of the reddened nose and swollen, sensual lip of the hard drinker, only the bloodshot eyes, with their heavy, vacant look to tell of their owner's habit; and it was this face had made Range glance at the soiled habiliments, and he became interested at once.

"Parson," he said to himself again; "and gone to the dogs," he added, as he slowly followed the man at a distance.

Arthur Range wanted his breakfast badly. He had been in the market since the night porter let him out at half-past four.

He did not want adventures, nor to practice philantropy or anthropological analysis; but somehow, as if some strange fate were bidding him follow that man, he set aside thoughts of coffee, fresh French bread, and fried soles—a delicacy which, not being found in his own country he hailed with intense appreciation—and slowly turned down Wellington Street after the dingy Inverness cape which concealed a multitude of shabbiness, and followed on to Waterloo Bridge.

"Now, I'm not clever at this sort of thing," said Range to himself; "but that chap's a gentleman—University man, perhaps—spent all his money, got into debt, done something to disgrace himself, and now he's drinking himself to death—sliding out of the world, and if he goes on like this it won't take long."

Range saw the man he followed go into a recess about half way across the bridge and sit down.

"Well, I may as well go and have my breakfast," he said. "Why should I notice him more than the thousands of other poor wretches who are going the same road?"

Then as he said this, and determined to go back, the strange influence that had brought him so far made him turn into the recess and sit down at right angles to the object of his interest.

The poor wretch had sunk down, with his back against the granite parapet, and with his chin upon his chest.

But as Range seated himself, he started up to stare angrily, the frown deepening upon his brow as he exclaimed, in a hoarse, cracked voice—

"Why are you following me? Are you in the police?"

"No," said Range. "I only saw you come here, and I followed that's all."

"What do you want?"

"Want? Nothing."

"Why have you tracked me, then? I saw you as I came out of that—— No," he burst out, with a hoarse laugh, "I won't say that. It has been more of a heaven to me. What do you want?"

"I want? Nothing. Have a cigar?"

Range took out his case, for he felt confused and puzzled.

He had walked after this man with no definite purpose.

He had followed him, he told himself, because he had followed him, and the offer of a cigar seemed the only way out of the difficulty.

"Cigar?" said the other, drawing back. "Well, why not? Thanks, I will."

He took the cigar, bit off the end, and lit it from the offered match.

Range also lit one, and they sat and smoked in silence.

"Poor fellow!" thought Range. "He speaks like a gentleman. Whatever he has done he is taking his punishment. I say," he said aloud, as the bloodshot eyes gazed into his, "do you always take what we call an eye-opener?"

"Morning drink? Yes, when I can get it. So would you if——"

"If what?"

"You wanted it to serve as supper, bed, and breakfast. However, it was the last."

"Last! What do you mean?" cried Range, as he read the apparent reality of the man's state in his eyes.

"Mean? Oh, nothing!"

Here was another silence, during which Range thought to himself—

"If this fellow's an impostor, he has some excuse for it."

"Are you—a clergyman?" said Range, at length.

"I was—suppose I am still," said the other bitterly. "Why? Do you want a private chaplain? If so and you will give a bit of bread, and a bone to gnaw like a dog, with some straw to sleep on, I'll come and pray for you. Ah!" he cried, with a fierce energy that was startling, "as man never prayed before."

"I say," said Range, coldly, "why do you drink?"

"Drink? To drown it all; to keep the thought of it all away—the starvation, the misery, the wandering homeless about these cruel streets. Here, listen; you're a Yankee, I'll tell you. I couldn't speak to one of my own people like this; but you are a stranger, I know by your speech. I ate nothing yesterday. Last night I walked the streets, save when I sat down now and then upon a doorstep, only to get up and tramp again when I heard the police. This morning I still had the twopence I had hoarded; it was the last of the shilling I got for my old waistcoat, and I had some drink—you saw me come out. Well it comforted me, as it has done before for hours, and then I came here."

He looked wildly at Range, who smoked on in silence.

"Why are you like this?" he then said at last.

"What you call luck, I suppose," said the other, fiercely. "But, there, it's all over now!"

"Come, we're men much of an age. Why was it? Some scrape?"

"Scrape? No. Poverty. I've no friends; no patronage. I came up and tried teaching—tutor and that sort of thing—till I got so low that I could not pay my way."

Range looked at him curiously.

"You don't believe me. Well, why should you? Try it till you are insulted, because, professing to be a gentleman, you are sneered at by the servants of the house where you go to teach, and are requested not to come again by the people who employ you because your garments are a disgrace."

Range still watched him.

"It was the drink did it," he said to himself.

"You don't believe, I see," returned his companion. "It is hard to believe. You think I disgraced myself in some way—that I drank. Well, think so. I took it. But you don't know how easy it is for a gentleman, once he is below the social level in appearance, to slide down—and down."

Range nodded.

"I don't know why I talk to you, but I do," said the man, hoarsely. "Perhaps, all the time I am speaking, you think I am some common swindler. Look at me—my rags—my dirt. Give me a shilling to get my hair cut and to have a good shampoo and wash, to make make myself look more like a Christian, and I shall spend it in drink, every penny; but I shall live three days longer."

"Oh, but, hang it man! where is your self-dependence? Surely, if pride did not stop it, a man might make some living in this busy town?"

"Pride?" said Range's companion, with a mocking laugh. "Why, I sold newspapers; but the boys were quicker, and I failed. I tramped down to Houndsditch and bought matches to sell again, but the boys were my rivals. Tell me what I can do, and I will willingly try it. I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed."

"But friends—have you no friends?"

"Not one I could apply to—lost as I am."

"But recommendations?"

"Recommendations?" said the other bitterly. "What are recommendations to a man who is dressed as I am? Look at me."

"Well, what are you going to do?"

"Sit here till night, and then, when the stars come out, and the lights are shining once more, I'm going——there!"

He rose, knelt on the seat, leaned over the parapet, and pointed down into the water.

"It will look dark and calm and restful then, and the tide will be going out towards the sea, and the sea seems like eternity, and eternity seems rest."

Range had turned, and also knelt upon the seat, looking sidewise at his companion who met his eyes once more and answered their unspoken question.

"Why do I speak like this? It is what I drank. I tell you I have not eaten since the night before last. You don't believe it, I see, but it is true; and I suppose I have been raving and talking as I never meant to talk. There some day I shall sleep more and dream."

He settled himself down in the corner of the recess, and Range smoked on watching him.

"Look here," he said at last, "suppose I help you."

"Help me?" said the other, bitterly. "Too late! too late!"

"No," said Range, stoutly; "it is not too late. I'm going to be very plain with you, but I'm going to help you all the same."

The man stared at him half angrily.

"Your state's too hard to believe," said Range. "It doesn't seem possible. I don't think it's true. In this great wealthy city there must be means of helping a young man like you out of the hole you're in."

"I tell you, it is too late," said his companion, hoarsely. "I did not ask you to follow me. Did I ask your help?"

"No; and if your story's true, your pride has kept you from asking help before you had got so low."

"Don't insult me in my misery, man. Let me go my own way."

"I can't help saying plain things," said Range. "You needn't call them insulting."

He kept on smoking very leisurely, speaking between puffs of the cigar. His companion's had long been out.

"You see, I dare say, I'm a stranger in London; and you're there; and I'm here. You form your opinion of me; I form mine of you, and here it is. You're a parson down in the mire for some reason that you don't tell me. I know you've had the education of a gentleman, and you have his manners; and seeing you as you are, you seem like a clever impostor; and as to the rhapsodical bit about the jumping into the river to-night and ending it all, I couldn't believe that."

"Till you saw the inquest in the morning paper," said the other, with a curious smile. "I'm not surprised. Say what you think."

"Well, I'll tell you what I think, and that is," said Range, with a smile, "that you're keeping something back; but all the same I can't go away from you here, knowing that perhaps a little act of mine might have stopped a young fellow—a gentleman—from going quite to the dogs."

The man had let his chin fall upon his breast once more, his thin white, dirty hands slowly picking the remains of his cigar to pieces, while his lips moved convulsively.

"Look here," said Range, who missed nothing, "I believe there's some truth in your story. I see you are in a state of abject misery. There's my card. I'm at the Grand Hotel for a few days. After this there's my address—

"'Sir Harry Fanshaw, Helmthorpe, Brackley, Yorkshire.'

"If I've gone from there they'll forward a letter. Now, there's twenty pounds—three fives, four pound ten and ten shillings in silver. Go and get some breakfast; don't touch that cursed drink: get yourself dressed like a Christian, and there—there try again."

As he spoke he quietly slipped the card and the money into his thin white hands, which closed upon them as the fingers of a drowning man cling talon-like to the rope that is thrown to him in his last struggle with death.

Then the squalid-looking creature turned slowly away, struggling painfully into a kneeling position with his arms upon the parapet, and his face bent down over them as if gazing once more into the river.

He did not speak. He uttered no word of thanks.

There was merely a slight move or two about the thin shoulders, such as might have meant emotion or a suppressed, mocking laugh; and when, after walking a few dozen yards farther over the bridge, and then back, Range looked in the recess, the man had not changed his position.

"Well," said Range to himself, "we've some smart chaps in New York, and Master John Pannell and his lady got over me pretty well; but if this fellow is an actor, as I begin to think he is, he beats them hollow."

He walked on a bit and entered the Strand.

"Shall I watch him and see what he does? No, I want my breakfast. I've spent twenty pounds. I'm afraid I've been cleverly swindled out of the money; but there was the chance that his story might be true and what are twenty pounds to me? I'd sooner have given a hundred than leave, and learn to-morrow morning that the dead body of a young man, dressed as a clergyman, had been taken out of the river.

"Now I wonder what made me follow him?" he said, after a pause.

"I wonder whether he was what he professed."

Another pause.

"I wonder whether I shall ever hear from him again. If he does write to me, I can easily find out whether he is an impostor or not."

Another pause.

"I wonder what Uncle Wash. would have said and done if he had been here."

Another pause.

"Money is of some use then, after all. Thank goodness! Here's the hotel. I'm starving. Well, I'll have another meal here, and then I'll go down to Sir Harry's and——"

He did not finish his sentence, for the memory of a very fair face with dark lashes and eyebrows, and soft, pale golden hair, filled his mental vision till he reached the coffee-room, where, glancing round to see that he was not observed, he made a terrific onslaught upon the breakfast.

"Ah, well!" he said, as he began to feel better. "Poor wretch! he'll get some comfort out of what I gave him. I'm afraid I've been fooled again, but I shall never know."

For there was no voice to whisper to his heart that, by one of the strangely devious paths of fate, he had that morning traveled down a way which his kindly act had paved making the road easy for help to come in a short time of need.

"Why, this is a very little world after all;" said Range to himself, as he rose from his seat and yawned. "If I'm not very much mistaken, there are the two German chaps who were at Salzingen the night I met the Fanshaws. Yes, those must be my solid-looking friends."

He glanced towards a table where a couple of long-haired, spectacled, heavy-looking men were partaking of their breakfast very heartily, apparently, but in utter silence.

They were too much occupied with their meal even to look round, but as Range slowly strode by them, sauntering to where one of the morning papers lay upon a table, heard the German travelers speak in deep guttural tones apparently alluding to something that had gone before.

For the bigger and stouter of the two said in an inquiring tone of voice—

"*Ja?*"

And the other, in the deepest and most gutteral of tones replied—

"*Zo!*"

"Pleasant companions they would be on a voyage," said Range to himself; and then to a waiter who came up, "Eh, for me?"

He took the buff envelope the man handed to him, and opened it as he returned to his seat to read—

"From Fanshaw,
"Helmthorpe,
"Brackley.

"To Arthur Lincoln Range, Esq.,
"Grand Hotel,
"London—

"Don't forget your promise. My brother and his niece are here. Country looking lovely."

"Ah!"

The latter was a sigh uttered by the reader whose face flushed slightly, and, crumpling up the pink message, he let it fall, and sat thinking for some few minutes.

"I shall go," he said to himself. "No need to hesitate. "Bah! I can't read papers now. I must go out and have a walk to still my nerves. Hang it all! I feel excited and queer as if I had taken too much wine last night, and I drank none. Steady my lad—steady! I thought you were as cool-blooded as a fish. I won't go. It's absurd. I should only be making myself miserable."

He sat thinking for a few moments.

"Yes, I will go: and if it does make me miserable, why, it does. I should like to see her—them again. The old General was a splendid fellow, and as for——. Oh! this won't do, I feel as if I wanted some quinine."

He got up and left the place, and as he quitted the room the taller and stouter of the German gentlemen rose slowly, napkin in hand, to stroll to Range's table and take the morning paper he had left.

As he reached the table, he dropped his napkin, and stooped slowly and picked it up.

No one observed the act; but when he returned to the table his companion did not say—

"*Zo!*"

He whispered softly—

"Got it?"

And the stouter German's eyes glittered behind his large spectacles as he calmly replied—

"All right!"

Then there was a faint rustling noise, and he took the crumpled-up telegram from the napkin and slipped it into his pocket.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAM BURTON IS INTERRUPTED.

LOOKYE here, Milly, my lass, you've been back here a month now, now, and you know what we said before you started for the furren parts wi' her ladyship: you said——"

"Do keep that nasty dog away, Mr. Burton. Look at its teeth!"

"Down, Bess! Down, lass! Teeth? Why, she's smiling at your pretty face, Milly. She knows her master loves you, and she's strange and very glad to see you again."

"Loves me, indeed!" said the pretty little rustic lady's-maid, who was standing in the grassy path of the Oak Wood, looking the prettier for the gleaming sunshine that fell in a silver shower through the leaves. "Loves me, indeed! You love your dogs more than anything else."

The broad-shouldered, black-bearded keeper, in whose closely-cut hair and crisp chin curls a few silver threads were peeping smiled good-humoredly, looking a fine, manly specimen of an Englishman, in his brown velveteens and tanned leggings, as he leaned upon his gun.

"Love my dogs better than owt else?" he said. "No, my lass, that isn't so. I do love my dogs because they're the truest, faithfullest beasts I knows on; and as to Bess there, why, she's so clean you might eat your dinner off her skin."

"Oh, how horrid!"

"Not it, my lass. Come now, don't be keeping me always at a distance, Milly, don't. Coom now, coom!"

"If you think I want to do what my lady did, marry an old man you're much mistook, Mr. Burton, I can tell you. I don't want to be no old man's nurse."

"Owd man!" said the keeper, staring. "Why, thee don't call me an owd man, lass. I'm only just past forty, when a man's in his prime,"

"I know you're twice as old as I am, Mr. Burton, and I'd thank you not to keep talking to me as you do."

"Nay, Milly, lass, thou does na mean mean that!" cried the keeper, who was growing excited, and who, when he grew excited, grew broad of speech.

"Indeed, but I do; and if you can't talk different stuff to that, you may keep your distance.

"Thou'rt a bit put out wi' me, lass, about something, but thou dost not mean it, so I won't be popped about it, and I will talk now about a something else. What dost ta think of the 'Merican gunt?"

"Oh, I don't know: he's very well."

"Seems makkin' up to Miss Judith, don't he?"

"What stuff you do talk, Mr. Burton. You're always thinking about making up to somebody."

"Well, that's natur' like, isn't it, lass? Everything as lives thinks about comin' together—birds and beasts and fishes, and all; so why shouldn't a man as known the brightest, and bonniest little lassie 'atween here and Hool?"

"Stuff and nonsense! Miss Judith's going to marry the captain."

"Then, if I were Miss Judith, I should tak' my young man to task for allus being hanging about aht r my lady. Mornin', noon, and night you see 'em together."

"Look you here, Sam Burton," cried the girl, turning scarlet, "if I was to tell my lady what you said, you'd be bundled off neck and crop by Sir Harry without a character."

"I don't care; it be true enough," said the game-keeper, sturdily.

"It isn't true!" cried the girl, fiercely. "How dare you say such a thing of my lady, who's the nicest, kindest, and most beautiful woman as ever lived!"

"She's all that lass, and it's a treat to hev her smile on you; but it be true all the same and I don't think as Sir Harry knows, or he'd stop it."

"There!" cried the girl, sharply; "there! and you ask me to let you keep company with me!"

"Well, I hev sin' you were quite a strip of a girl, Milly. I allus loved thee, lass."

"And a nice life I should have with you!"

"I don't know what thou means, lass?"

"Why, with your nasty, suspicious, jealous ways, a nice husband you'd make!"

"I'd make thee as true and honest a husband as a lass could have, Milly; and I'd about worship thee, my lass."

"And if Mr. Arthur Range spoke to me, or gave me a bit of a new ribbon, you'd be half mad with jealousy."

"Nay, lass, not I," said the keeper, smiling. "Mr. Arthur Range is a nice, free-spoken gentleman, and allus got a kind word for them as does anything for him."

"Ah, yes! gives you money, I suppose."

"Yes, often, my lass. He's free wi' the brass; but if he were ony a poor man, I should like him just as well. The way he talks to and treats a dog does a man good to see."

"Dogs again!" said the girl, contemptuously; and then, with an arch, laughing look, "then I was wrong about you being jealous, Mr. Burton, and you wouldn't mind if the captain were to kiss me once again?"

The keeper's countenance changed; his brow knit, and he looked five years older on the instant.

"I told thee before, my lass, that though he's Sir Harry's favorite, there's no good in the captain, and he means no good to thee. If he lays hands on thee again, gentleman or no gentleman, keep my place or lose it, I'll thrash him as I would the blackguardest porcher as come over from one of the big towns. I'd half kill him!"

"Burton! Sam! Oh, don't!" faltered the girl; "don't talk like that; you frighten me."

"Frighten you, my bonny lass?" he said as he let his gun fall against the trunk of the tree where they were standing, and with his face changing again till it wore a look of tender solicitude. "Don't you be scared wi' me. Why, Milly, lass, wouldn't thou hev a man ready to stand up for the lass he loves with all his heart? There, there, there!" he said, taking her gently and unresistingly in his arms, and smoothing down her rather wilful hair, "don't 'ee cry. Because I could be hard and fierce with anyone as was wrong to my lass, I couldn't say an ill word to thee."

"Don't, don't," she sobbed. "There, let me go. I must go now."

"Thou must go now? Nay not for a minute, my bonny bird. Just give me a wee bit of hope to tak' back wi' me—just to think over when I'm out watching o'nests. Say thou'lt try to love me, my lass."

"No, no! Let me go, Sam."

"Yes, I'll let thee go, lass. Why, what is it?"

"There's—there's a man watching us!" she whispered.

"Nay that's a trick o' thine to mak' me let go. But I'll do it wi'out that, my lass. I'm a big, strong chap, and could do owt 'cept use my strength again a woman. I'm a wild one, but thou could do what thou likest with me. There, 've let thee go, and I'll wait till thou'lt lay thy pretty head thyseu upon my breast, and lilt that pretty mooth to mine."

"There is—someone watching us, Sam," she whispered; and she turned and fled as the beautiful long-haired Gordon setter sprang up, uttered a short bark, and plunged into the wood.

The keeper seized the gun, and sprang after the dog just as a hoarse voice roared, with a savage oath—

"Call your dog off, or I'll put my knife in him!"

"Down, Bess! down, lass!" cried the keeper; and the dog crouched as the keeper stood face to face with a tall, unshorn, ragged specimen of humanity. He was not fifty, but his hair was white, and his nose and eyes were inflamed with constant application to the spirit glass.

"You put up that knife, or it'll be the worse for thee," cried the keeper. "What are you doing here?"

"Looking at you; can't you see?" growled the man.

"Are you going to put up that knife?"

"Are you going to call off your dog?"

"The dog's quiet."

"And the knife's shut," said the man, making the strong blade click, but keeping his eyes fixed upon the keeper, half mockingly, the while.

"How long has thee been there?"

"Why can't you say how long have you been there?" said the man, banteringly. "All the time you were courting that pretty lass there."

"You blackguard!"

"Don't call names, keeper; I didn't come to you. It was you brought the girl here."

The keeper gave his foot an angry stamp, examining the man searchingly the while, with his eyes running from head to foot.

"It's all right, keeper," said the fellow. "I haven't got any hares or pheasants in my pockets, and I haven't got a gun hid away, and I haven't stole anything."

"What are you doing here? Do you know you're trespassing?"

"I shall have to open that knife again," said the man, as the dog began sniffing suspiciously about him.

"Down, Bess! To heel, old girl!" cried the keeper; and the dog trotted back, to stand watching the man, and now and then uttering a low whine, as if not approving of the visitor.

"Do I know I'm trespassing, keeper? No! I only know I'm in the wood. Got any 'bacca, mate? My box is empty."

"Then I tell you that you are trespassing, if that won't do for thee. Now, then, beon; thou'rt after no good."

"How do you know, keeper, eh?"

"Never you mind how I know it. You be off our grounds."

"Our grounds, eh?" said the fellow, laughing. "Ha! ha! ha! Do you and Sir Harry go halves?"

"Look here, my fine fellow," said Burton, sharply, "are you going?"

"No!"

"No?"

"Do you s'pose I've tramped all the way down here from London to see your master and I'm going back without seeing him?"

"You have come to see Sir Harry?"

"Yes, I have, and what have you got to say to that?"

"Why didn't you go up to the house?"

"Because the chaps in livery or the old butler would have sent me away."

"And you were hanging about here to see him?"

"I was having a nap, old 'un, when you come and disturbed me. P'r'aps I was going to wait and see him."

"What for?"

"Got it! Why, you're as clever as a lawyer at the'zizes. P'r'aps I'm going to tell him what you've been saying about her ladyship."

"You——"

"There, hold off, keeper, and—do you hear?—keep that dog quiet if you want it to live."

The man's hand had gone into his pocket again for the knife, Bess, seeing her master's anger having sprung forward with a growl.

"Down, Bess, down!" cried the keeper.

"There, you needn't be scared, as you call it. I don't s'pose I shall tell tales about you—unless it pays me. P'r'aps I've got a better game on than that. Look here, keeper; you've got to tell Sir Harry I want to see him."

"What for?"

"Never you mind. He's just married. I know all about it, you see, and about the captain and all of it; and I'm going back to London by rail, I am, with a good suit o' clothes on my back."

The keeper stared at the man uneasily.

"Now, then, how are you going to do it? Tell him Abel Pollock, of the old Hundred and Tenth wants to see him."

"You haven't been a soldier."

"Haven't I, keeper? Why, I was all through the Mutiny with Sir Harry, as was only Colonel Fanshaw then. He'll know me in a jiffy. He hasn't forgot his old servant, I know."

The keeper fidgeted with his gun, for the man's words made him uneasy.

He had spoken with a leer, and now and then he seemed to emphasize his words with a cunning wink, as if to make the keeper understand that he knew a great deal that he could tell if he liked.

"I'm in no hurry, keeper; only if I am to be kept waiting, I should like a pipe o' 'bacca."

Burton did not respond, only stood scanning the fellow over; and in his blunt honest mind a score of uneasy thoughts kept chasing each other.

Suppose this fellow had got hold of something that related to his old colonel's past life—and probably he had, as his presence showed—what a task he was undertaking to introduce the repulsive-looking scoundrel to his master's presence.

And then there was his handsome young wife, and his visitors.

It might be terrible; and at last, almost in despair, he said—

"Look here, you'd better write to Sir Harry. I'm not going to take you to him."

"Oh, yes, you are," said the man, with a sly, ugly look; "you're a-going to take me, keeper. In private, too. Let me see; there's the tother general, Sir Robert Fanshaw, just come home from the Indies, at the house, and young Miss Judith, and Captain Carleigh, whose regiment's been at the Cape; and her new ladyship. You see, I know all about what company we keep."

"I tell you, if you want to see Sir Harry, you must write."

"Blow me! if I didn't forget the Yankee gent, keeper, that I did. There's him, too. Now I put it to you: it wouldn't look nice for me to be tumbling right in on Sir Harry dressed like this, now, would it? It would shock him to see his Abel so hard up. Ah! keeper, what tales I could tell you about Sir Harry when he was in Bengal! Them were days, and no mistake."

"How came you so hard up?" said Burton, to temporize, for a vague notion was coming upon him that there was something wrong.

and that he might be doing a serious injury to his master by taking this man to him suddenly.

"Luck," said the fellow, passing his tongue over his dry lips, and looking thirstily about—acts that indicated another cause of his degenerate state.

"Look here," said Burton, brightening as an idea struck him. "My lodge is only about half a mile from here. You come up there and wait, and I'll go and tell Sir Harry where you are."

"Thankye, keeper, thankye. You are a man, you are. And you'll take me to your lodge?"

"Yes."

"And give me a crust of bread and cheese?—I'm rather peckish."

"Yes."

"And half a pint o' home brewed?"

"Yes, I've got some beer."

"Thankye kindly, keeper; but I don't want to sit waiting there till you come back P.C. number nine thousand seven hundred and forty-four, Yorkshire county constabulary.

"I'll have my bit by-and-by. Look here keeper, no nonsense. I'm going to make you take me straight to Sir Harry, now at once—'tooty sweet,' as the French soldiers used to say."

"I wean't do it," said the keeper, sturdily. "Now, look here. I don't know whether what you say's true, but I know my dooty, and that is to see you off our grounds, so, come—pack."

Burton's nervous anxiety had passed off, and he was sturdily about to do what he told himself was right.

"Look here, keeper," said the man, thrusting forward his face in an ugly way, "are you going to take me straight to Sir Harry to have it out?"

"No!" said the keeper.

"Suppose I tell all I heard to-day?"

"You can tell if you like," said Burton. "You don't bully me into doing what I don't like."

"All right. Pr'aps I shan't tell," said the fellow, with a sneer. "I've a better card to play than that. Your card is a small trump and I've got the ace in my pocket. I s'pose you can play cards?"

"Never you mind what I can do. Me and my dog's going to see you off these grounds."

"All right, keeper; but I'll try you once more: "it'll be better for all parties. Will you take me to my old colonel straight?"

"No!"

"Then here goes. I see Lady Fanshaw and the young miss drove out to Brackley town in the pony-trap. I'll go and meet her, and see what her ladyship will say."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

On The Rail.

BY PAUL H. DENHAM.

IT was the second week in October last, and I had just returned from a delightful Continental campaign, when urgent family matters necessitated my immediate presence in Ireland.

"I shall have to start by the 8.25 from Euston to-night," I remarked to a clerical friend who had just dropped in to welcome me back to London.

"I'll come and see you off," he replied promptly. "But it is too bad to lose you so soon after your return."

"I don't suppose I shall be very long in Ireland," I remarked, again reading over the letter in my hand. "Although I might stay, and go and hear some of those trials that are coming on soon."

I had so much to see to during a few hours at my disposal, that Mr. Chasuble soon took his departure, promising to call for me in time for the Irish mail,

I waited until the last minute; but he did not put in an appearance.

Finally, not a little piqued at being so treated, I went off, like the independent woman I am, and soon myself and my traveling impedimenta were comfortably ensconced in a second-class car at Euston. Looking at my watch, I found that it yet wanted eight minutes to the time of starting and I decided to walk up the platform and give a glance round for my faithless friend.

Sure enough, there he was, hurrying down the platform.

He was profuse in his apologies. I forget what they were, but I believe I considered his excuses valid, and forgave his breach of faith.

"Going the whole way, miss?" inquired a guard, approaching us and touching his cap.

"Yes," I replied. "I am going over by the Holyhead mail to Dublin."

"Thank you, miss;" and he walked away.

"I am so glad, Mr. Chasuble," I said, "that I have got a compartment all to myself, as I like to take off my hat, tie my head in a shawl, and lie down and make myself comfortable."

"Quite so," he assented. "I see them putting in the foot-warmers; don't you think you had better take your seat?"

He was gazing into the cars as he was speaking, and passed the one in which my rugs and shawls were deposited.

"Which is your car?" he asked, peering into each one. "They all seem to be more or less occupied."

"This is mine," I replied, indicating the car he had just passed. "What a nuisance!" I added, in an undertone. "There is some man in the far corner; he has come in since I got out."

Two minutes more, and the train steamed slowly out of the station.

Mr. Chasuble walked by the side of the car, and I kept chatting to him out of the window, until at last he could come no farther.

I drew up the window, drew down the blinds, and seated myself near the lamp, in order to improve my mind by the perusal of the last number of *London Society*, and scarcely glanced at my traveling companion.

Presently, there is no use denying it, I began to feel hungry.

The mental pabulum had not refreshed me physically, and I longed to attack the sandwiches with which I had been careful to provide myself.

I laid down the paper, retreated into my corner, and looked at my companion.

I was in the corner of the opposite seat, at the far end of the compartment.

Suddenly it struck me that there was something odd in the way in which he was wrapped up on the seat.

He was evidently a tall powerful man—I could see that plainly.

He sat with his back on a line with the door, and his legs stretched out on the seat. I noticed that he wore a tall hat, rather slouched over his forehead, a la a certain noble marquis on the Ministerial benches when he is meditating an attack upon an Irish unconvincible.

He wore a heavy dark overcoat, inside of which was folded a soft, warm-looking white cashmere handkerchief; his hands were beneath the well-tucked-in warm rugs with which he was enveloped from his waist to his feet, and his eyes were closed. I congratulated myself upon the latter fact, and furtively opened my paper of sandwiches.

My companion, apparently, slept on soundly; he never moved a muscle.

He might have been a wax figure of a very pretty man of about forty, with a short brown beard and slight moustache.

My own impression is that I am somewhat of a romantic nature—at least my friends call it romantic, my enemies hysterical—and I could not avoid giving rein to my imagination, and thinking there was something uncanny in the way in which this wax or wooden man sat there over two mortal hours and made no movement. Not even the faintest flicker of an eyelid demonstrated whether he were alive or dead.

All this time I had not lain down. I had been dipping into the magazine at intervals but, feeling tired, I proceeded to take off my hat, tie a little woolen shawl around my head, and then settled myself on the seat in very much the same position as my motionless fellow traveler. There I sat, looking at him.

I was almost fascinated by him. I began to think of all the horrible crimes I had ever heard of in connection with railway traveling, and I wondered if this man were only pretending to be asleep, and that, when I was off my guard, he would suddenly rob me, and perhaps murder me.

Or could it be that he really was dead, and that in some way or other his murderers had managed to place him in the carriage? I also surmised he might be under the influence of some narcotic.

And even more ridiculous thoughts forced their way into my brain.

But one resolution I firmly resolved to adhere to—I would not fall asleep on any account whatever!

We stopped at a station for a minute or two.

I drew aside the blind and looked out. The mail-bags were handed in; off we went with the speed of the wind, yet my companion made no sign.

Like the majority of human beings, I regret to say, I took my part in macadamising Hades; for, despite my good resolutions, I succumbed to the blandishments of the drowsy god, and was soon sound asleep.

Some time or other during my life I had read a book on the philosophy of dreams, in which the writer said that dreams, no matter what period of time they seemed to have extended over, always occurred at the moment of waking.

I cannot vouch for the theory.

I only know that I began to dream my fellow-traveler was standing over me, that he was dragging off my muffling; and so vivid and real was my terror that I started up with a little scream, to find my heavy railway-rug slipping off me from the oscillation of the car, and, glancing at my companion, to perceive that his hat was slightly raised, and his eyes were wide open.

Yet his position was unchanged, so were his traveling-rugs.

They were not in any way affected by the motion of the train.

Apparently he never took the least notice of my scream, but stared calmly at me with a pair of the most mournful-looking, beautiful, fawn-like, soft, brown eyes it has ever been my lot to behold in the head of any human being.

I again settled myself on the seat, and tried to concentrate my attention upon one of the discarded magazines.

But it was all of no use.

Ever and anon my restless inquisitive eyes wandered from the pages before me, and rested upon the man at the end of the compartment.

The large, beautiful, brown eyes were yet fixed upon me.

Now and again the lids drooped heavily over them; but whenever the eyelids were raised, he surveyed me with the same strange mournful gaze.

Suddenly the speed of the train became slower, and, pulling myself together, I tried to recollect the next station we were to stop at.

I had an indistinct idea that we had passed Stafford; if so, the next station would be Chester.

The fixed stare of the motionless man was making me thoroughly nervous; therefore, as I knew the train delayed for a few minutes at Chester, I determined to call the guard and to change cars.

We drew up at the platform, and I hurriedly put on my hat and pulled up the blind.

But, as I did so, I recollected how crowded the other cars were, and I certainly had no valid excuse for wishing to shift my quarters.

Yet it was humiliating to think that I, Aspasia Bricks, Honorary Secretary to the British Spinsters' Society for the Repression of Man, should be thus cowed merely by the eye of one of those whom I had vowed to bring into subjection!

Whilst I deliberated I lost my opportunity.

The engine gasped, snorted, and groaned and away we were again whirled into the darkness of the night.

I did not settle myself to sleep again. I felt too painfully wide awake to do so.

There I sat, with my hands in my pockets of my ulster, my feet on the now stone cold foot-warmer, and my eyes on the eyes of the man in the corner, who fascinated me as though he were a snake, and I some helpless animal he wanted to lure.

Should I speak to him? I asked myself.

So maddeningly restless did I become that I could not sit still.

I stood up, let down the window, and again looked out.

From having so often traveled by the same route, I knew quite well the part of the journey we had arrived at.

We were rushing through Wales, and I knew there was no stoppage until the tickets were collected.

I sat down again, and another half-hour passed away in the same manner, without my having mustered up courage enough to address my fellow-traveler.

I closed my eyes to shut out the gaze of his, when I was aroused by a thunderous roar.

I started up. My companion was motionless as before, although we were careering madly through the great tubular bridge over the Menai Straits.

My heart was beating violently, and when we had got some little distance upon terra firma again, I rose, walked up to him, and said—

"Don't you find this long railway journey very fatiguing."

Perhaps he thought the question too inane a one to reply to, for he did not seem to hear me.

But I was not to be baffled, and I returned to the attack.

"You must find it particularly tiresome sitting there in the one position," I said, in my most dulcet and insinuating tones.

No reply, but the dark, soft, mournful eyes looked into mine.

Flesh and blood—at least my flesh and blood—could stand it no longer.

I seized his arm, gave it a shake, and almost shrieked—

"What is the matter with you? Are you mad, or dead, or something on wires?"

At my touch the hitherto motionless figure seemed as though galvanised into life.

Slowly he withdrew his hands, slowly he divested himself of his rugs, slowly he rose from his seat, and stood calmly before me—a man of splendid physique, with his arms hanging loosely by his sides.

There he stood, and there I stood looking at him.

He swayed to and fro a little from the motion of the car, but he did not attempt to grasp anything to steady himself.

"O!" I exclaimed, in some trepidation, "I hope I have not disturbed you! Won't you sit down again?" I inquired hospitably touching his arm.

Instead of which, the colossal figure followed me down the compartment several steps.

Not a muscle of his face moved, and his eyes were yet fastened upon me.

I retreated into my corner, terror-stricken whilst over me stood this stony-looking Frankenstein which I had raised, and had not the power to lay.

I am ashamed to confess that several times I almost lost all control over myself, and very nearly fainted.

At length the train stopped, and a clergyman and the guard entered the car, where I sat more dead than alive.

"O, dear me!" exclaimed the clergyman, in a distressed voice, "I hope my poor brother did not annoy you. We did not think he would move; he never does unless touched."

"I put him in here," said the guard, "because there was only this lady, and she was going the whole way. I wouldn't, of course, put him where there were a lot of passengers."

I told my story.

The clergyman told me that of my Frankenstein.

Twice a year the latter made the same journey, being placed in a car at one end of the route, and met by some one at the other end.

He lived six months at a time with each of his two brothers—one lived in London, and one in Wales.

He was their eldest brother, and he was—deaf, dumb, and blind!

THE THERMOMETER.—An adjustable electric apparatus has been applied to a thermometer, which rings a bell when the temperature rises or falls above or below a desired point. A dry and wet bulb thermometer has been made which does the same thing. It will be readily seen how useful such thermometers might be made in discovering incipient fires and as an aid to sleepy watchmen.

Bric-a-Brac.

STEREOTYPING.—William Ged, a printer in Edinburgh, was the inventor of stereotype printing. The first book so printed was an edition of Sallust, published in 1730, and printed from the same plates in 1744.

SOAP TREES.—There are a number of soap trees growing in Tallahassee. The berries are about the size of a marble, of a yellowish soapy appearance. The owners boil the seed to make soap. In China, Japan, and other semi-tropical countries, the berries are used as a substitute for soap just as they are taken from the trees.

POPULAR FALLACIES.—An English electrical journal has discovered the following popular fallacies concerning lightning, viz.: That chewing the splinters from a tree struck by lightning will cure the toothache; that such splinters will not burn; that the bodies of those killed by lightning shock do not become corrupt, and that no one is killed by lightning while they are asleep.

WHERE IT IS.—In lobsters and crabs the mouth is situated underneath the head, and consists of a soft upper lip, then a pair of upper jaws provided with a short feeler, below which is a thin lower lip. Then follow two pairs of membranaceous under jaws which are lobed and hairy, and next three pairs of foot jaws. The horseshoe crab has no special jaws, the thighs answering the purpose.

A NICE SUM.—Some years ago, at a nobleman's house near Hyde Park, a dispute arose about a certain passage in Scripture, and a Dean who was present denying that there was any such text, a Bible was called for. When it was opened a marker was found in it, which, on explanation, proved to be a bank post bill for $200,000. It might possibly have been placed there as a reproach to the son, who, perhaps, did not consult the Bible so often as his mother could have wished.

A PECULIAR CITY.—Key West, in Florida, is one of the most peculiar cities in the world. It has a population of more than 15,000, principally whites, but has no chimneys, and show windows, no brick blocks, no fine buildings, no planing mills, no steam mills, no machine shops, no farmers driving in with loaded teams, no country roads, no railroads, no rattle of machinery, no noise of any kind, except the beating of the waves against the coral-bound shores, and yet Key West, for its size, does a very large manufacturing and shipping business.

THE HIGH SEAS.—Every country has, according to international law, sole authority over the sea within three miles of its shores. This is called the closed sea. In opposition to this, the sea beyond these is known as the high or open sea, and is common to all countries. Nowadays the distinction between the two is seldom enforced, except in the case of fishing. Here the high sea is the happy hunting-ground of all nations, but no foreign fisherman are allowed to ply their craft in the closed sea unless permitted to do so by license of the nation, or by special treaty.

THE RAT.—A rat invariably washes himself all over after eating, no matter what, by licking its paws just as a cat does. They are naturally exceedingly clean animals, a parasite is said never to be seen on any of them. Even those living in filth are always clean in their person and their teeth beautifully so. Professor Coleman states that a rat is the only animal that will thrive and always have a clean coat, while living in the most filthy places. In fact a rat will live in air that would be fatal to any other animal, hence it is understood why he should always be cleaning himself; never does a rat finish a bit of food or touch a human hand without washing himself immediately afterwards.

GOLD LEAF.—The gold-leaf business is a singular one. The old gold used consists of pieces of jewelry, such as brooches, old watch cases, rings, bracelets, obsolete coins, etc. These are purchased chiefly from pawnbrokers. The stuff is first melted into a bar, then it goes through a process of oxygenation, which usually takes from six to ten hours, in order to free it from copper and silver. The gold is put in sand crucibles of various dimensions and melted, when it is fit for the acid. After it is refined it is put through a rolling machine till brought out to the thinness of writing paper. It is then cut into strips one inch square, and put into a cutch made of French paper, in order to beat it to the proper consistency. After this process of beating has been three times repeated, it is put into books for sale.

THE OLDEST RAILWAY.—The first railway in the United States was three miles in length, extending from the granite quarries at Quincy, Massachusetts, to Neponset river. It was commenced in 1825 and completed in 1827. The gauge was five feet. The rails were pine, a foot deep, covered with an oak plate, and these with flat bars of iron. A short coal road was commenced in 1827, from the coal mines of Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania. The rails on this road were of timber, with flat iron bars. The first locomotive for use on a railway was invented by Richard Previteck in 1804, and tried upon the coal road in South Wales. George Stephenson built the first really successful engine in 1814, and tested it upon the Killingwood Railroad, in the north of England. The first locomotive for actual service constructed in America was 'The Best Friend,' built for the South Carolina Railroad by E. I. Miller in 1830, although Peter Cooper built a little locomotive, for experimental service, in 1830, just before Mr. Miller's 'Best Friend' was completed.

A PRETTY PICTURE.

Is she beautiful? no!
Is she fair, is she tall?
Is she dark, is she small?
On my word I don't know
But she's bonnie that's all.

Now, a stranger she'll greet
With a frank, ready clasp,
For her white hand can grasp
Like a man's—firm, complete.
All through she's just sweet.

Her clear eyes look out
On the ebb and the flow,
On the glitter and show,
Without shadow or doubt,
Like a child at a show.

Her nature's as bright
As a glad Summer's day,
Like a streamlet at play,
Like a bird in its flight
She goes on her way.

A coquette? no, not she!
Clear as glass, true as steel,
While her frank eyes reveal
That her heart still is free.
Can she help what men feel?

Free, as yet, to be won,
And God speed the wooer.
Foreweeter and truer
Than she there are none,
'Mongst rich or 'mongst poor.

NAMELESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "UNDER WILD SKIES," "ALONG THE LINE," "PENRIVEL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

It often seemed to Lilian, on looking back, that no time in all her life had seemed quite so long as her visit at Kensington.

True, Mrs. Grant treated her with all her old kindness.

The children clung to her with pretty endearing ways, but there was a strange unrest in her heart.

Whilst with Lady Leigh she had known it was impossible for her to see Guy Ainslie.

Now she was ever expecting him; each knock, each letter made her heart beat. She was always looking for the face that never came—the face dearest to her on earth.

"Guy Ainslie looks well," said her gentle hostess, when some allusion has been made to his brief, flying visit. "I think he has quite got over his disappointment, and that the wound Lady Dacres inflicted on him by her treachery is healed at last."

Lilian answered nothing; she felt somehow she could not discuss Guy quite as an ordinary person.

Perhaps her blushes reminded Mary Grant of the little secret she had once confessed.

"Dear!" she said, gently stroking the fair hair caressingly; "has not absence done its work; haven't you learned yet that Guy Ainslie is only a man like other men'?"

Lilian shook her head.

"Don't speak of it, please," she whispered "it makes me so ashamed; and yet I have done nothing wrong.

"It is only he was so kind to me he won my heart almost without my knowing it, and now I cannot change. I wish I could."

"And Archie?"

Lilian started.

She had fancied from Mrs. Grant's silence her brother had forgotten his passing infatuation.

"He, too, finds it hard to forget. Lilian, my darling, I should so like you for a sister. Tell me, is there no hope for my brother?"

Lilian hid her face on Mrs. Grant's shoulder, and whispered "No!"

"If you would only bring yourself to think of it," answered her friend, "I believe you would be very happy with Archie; he would give you just the quiet, easeful home you need."

"But I do not love him—I never shall."

"Dear, believe me, in time you will forget Guy Ainslie. No love lives on quite without hope; in time Guy's image will be forgotten."

"I think not."

"You are wasting your love upon a man who will never return it; Guy put aside all thought of love or marriage long ago when Vivian Ormond deceived him. I think myself, sometimes, that unless Sir John died and leaves his old love free he will never have a wife."

Lilian had thought so, too.

"And he would not make you happy, dear," went on her mentor, fondly. "Guy has his way to make in the world; he is very ambitious.

"If a time came when his wife's past history were discussed—if it grew noised abroad that she was nameless, that she owed all to him—I do not think his pride would ever survive it.

"Even if Guy loved you, Lilian, he is the last person in the world you ought to marry."

"He does not love me, he never will; we are only discussing impossibilities."

"Then, dear, if you say frankly it is an impossibility, tell me, do you mean to waste your whole life in thinking of it?"

"I don't understand," said Lilian, a little stiffly; "why should marriage be the end and aim of a girl's life?"

"Because it is her natural vocation."

"Then I do not want my vocation. I am very happy as I am."

"Yes, Lady Leigh loves you as a daughter: but think, dear, she is getting old, she cannot live many years longer. You will then be stranded once more on life's wide ocean, my dear.

"Believe me, you are too pretty, too gentle to be tossed about the world; what you need is a home, and someone to love you and care for you."

She pressed her lips to the girl's forehead and went out without another word, wisely thinking her little lecture would make more impression if Lilian were left to muse over it alone.

The girl sat on by the bright wood fire which had all its Christmas brilliance.

The holly and the mistleto still decked the walls, but there was little of Christmas joy or happiness at Lilian's heart.

She was full of a strange, keen pain. Was it just as Mrs. Grant had said?

If Guy really loved her must she send him away—must she with her own hand dash the cup of happiness from her lips.

Why should Archibald Darby be thought a safe and suitable match for her? Why? Because he was rich and of an assured position did his own sister admit, ay, and urge that the shadow on her life would matter nothing to him, and yet in the same voice tell her that same shadow, if she married her life's love, would blight their happiness and prosperity?

Lilian thought she understood. Mr. Darby owed nothing to his own exertions; he was not the architect of his own fortune, and he was of a nature which cares little for the frowns of others.

Guy, on the contrary, had his way to make.

He was very proud, ay, intensely proud, sensitively alive to any breath of dishonor.

She who worshipped him knew his character well; she mused over it until her decision was taken.

Even if her heart's wish were granted her she would push it from her; she would never let injury come to Guy Ainslie through love of her.

She would never live to see a day when, bound to her by his own solemn word, he should yet regret the ties that united him forever.

No; anything in the whole world was better than that!

So she sat on in the December firelight, half dreaming of the future which eighteen months ago had looked so fair, and was now so blank and drear.

And so, alone and silent, the man who loved her better ten thousand times than his own life found her.

"Lilian!"

She looked up and met his eyes—the eyes she had seen so often in her dreams, bending over her with a strange protecting fondness.

She spoke no word; it seemed to her what she had called an impossibility had actually come to pass.

Her hero had learned to love her; her King Cophetua was ready to stoop to his beggar maid.

"My darling!" the man's voice was strong and clear; there was no mistaking the truthful ring in its very syllable. "My darling, I have come to tell you why I refused your friendship the other night.

"Lilian, we never can be friends; to me you must be all or nothing. "Dearest, I want you to put your hand in mine, and promise to give yourself to me. I want you at my side, Lilian, in joy or sorrow, sickness or health.

"I want to have the right to protect you from every trial, every danger. Darling, lift your beautiful eyes to my face and tell me it is not all in vain; that you will not send me away disappointed and heartbroken, but will be my own dear beloved wife?"

And then in the firelight, looking into her eyes as though he could read his sentence written there, Guy waited for her answer. And it was long in coming.

She loved him so, she trusted him with all her heart.

She was weary, oh! so weary, of her lonely life.

She longed, with such an unutterable longing, to throw herself into his arms and claim them as her sure refuge from all sorrow.

Mrs. Grant's warnings rang deep in her ears.

She knew the man she loved was loyal and true, but she knew also that he was proud and sensitive; that he had had a long uphill fight with fortune.

Ought she, could she add to his burdens? Ought she, nameless and obscure, to take advantage of his generosity, and become a clog to his future?

She loved him, but there are some few women in the world so true, so noble, that they can conquer even love itself rather than injure their heart's dearest. Lilian was of these few.

Raising her violet eyes to Guy Ainslie's face, she said simply—

"Thank you from the very bottom of my heart. I shall respect and honor you while life remains, but I can never marry you."

"Why?"

His eyes were bent upon her face, she shrank beneath their scrutiny.

"Do not ask me!"

"I must ask you. I love you, Lilian, as I think few women are loved. I must know why you reject me. I claim an explanation as my right!"

She was silent.

The words she longed to speak must not be uttered, and no others came to her lips.

"Lilian," said the strong man, tenderly, "my little Lilian, can't you love me, my darling? I may have seemed hard and stern, but to you I will be all gentleness. Darling, trust yourself to me!"

"I cannot," she cried, bitterly, "I cannot. Oh! do not ask me why."

"I do ask you."

Her tears were falling fast. Her grief moved Guy Ainslie's very heart, but he persisted in his question; he meant to have his answer.

"You never seemed to dislike me," he said, gently; "from the moment of our first meeting you treated me as a very near friend."

"But you will not give me your friendship," she said, quietly; "you refuse it me!"

"Because I want something more. Lilian did you feel nothing more than friendship for me that last day at Castle Dacres, when you put you hand upon my shoulder and begged me not to judge you harshly?"

"You shook off my hand," she replied wistfully.

"Ay, because I was under a cruel mistake. I tell you I know the truth now. I loved you wildly even then; to love I now add honor. I ask you, as the hightest blessing Heaven can give, to be my wife."

"And I thank you, but refuse."

"Why?"

"Am I bound to give a reason?"

"Yes."

"But if I have none?"

"You must have, you are not a coquette! It can give you no pleasure to trifle with a man's holiest feelings. Lilian, do you refuse me because they have told you the secret of my life? because, three years ago, was engaged to my cousin, Vivian Ormond, she whom you knew as Lady Dacres? My darling, this need not make you hesitate. If my love for her were not dead and gone, do you think I would injure you by asking you to marry me?"

"It is not that," she murmured.

"Have I a rival?"

"No!"

"You want me to believe that, being heart whole and fancy free, you yet refuse my love?"

She was silent.

"Lilian," and his arms released her from their clasp, while his eyes again sought hers. "As Heaven is above us I believe you love me!

"Sweet, I believe your heart is mine, though you may not know it. If you can look into my face and say can never care for me, I promise you that you shall never more be troubled by the mention of my love."

She raised her head proud and erect; she tried to do his bidding, but words failed her.

The falsehood would not come—Guy Ainslie strained her to his heart.

"Ah, little girl," he murmured, reproachfully, "you could not be untrue. I knew you would not look into my face and tell me a lie."

"I love you?" she whispered. "I think I have loved you ever since we first met."

"And yet you made me miserable."

"How?"

"By sending me away!"

"I cannot help it," she moaned: "it is not my fault. Oh, Mr. Ainslie, indeed it is not."

"Call me by my name," he cried, passionately. "Never let me be anything but Guy from your lips, Lilian."

"Guy," she said simply, repeating the name in mute obedience to his will. "Guy you know I can never be aught to you, never while I live."

"And why?"

The girl nerved herself for the great effort.

"Because your wife must be above suspicion, because her past must be open as a book, and in mine there is a secret."

"Tell it to me!"

"How can I? I do not even know it myself, Guy. I have not even a name of my own; my parents may have been felons! How can I take the shadow of disgrace into your family? How can I bring such a burden upon you?"

Guy Ainslie fairly laughed in his glad relief.

"Is that all, you foolish child?" he said, lightly. "What does that matter? Do you think I could love you any better if you had half a dozen families claiming you as a descendant? Really, Lilian, I am very angry with you!"

"It matters a great deal, Guy!"

"I say it matters nothing!"

"You say so now! You love me, and you are so unselfish you would wreck your future for my sake. But do you think I could accept the sacrifice which would blight your prospects?"

He knew that the news of his honors had not reached her, that she was replying to him as simple Guy Ainslie, who worked hard for his living, and he never told her that he was Lord Earl.

He felt his riches and title would only be so many obstacles to his success.

"I think if you love me you ought to marry me!" he said, earnestly. "Think of what my life will be without you!"

"You will forget me in time!"

"I am not good at forgetting."

A long, long silence, broken only by the ticking of the gold ormolu clock on the mantle-piece.

Lilian shivered even in the firelight. Guy's heart ached as he noted how frail and delicate she looked.

What would his riches and honors avail him if she persisted in her refusal to share them?

"Lilian!" he said, hotly; "don't let your absurd pride wreck both our lives! Darling, if you love me, nothing in the world should divide us!"

"But in the future!"

"Let the future be my care! Don't you think I should go on loving you, you dear little thing?"

"You might see all you had sacrificed. Your friends might convince you of how you had spoilt your life. Guy, if we were married, and I saw that you regretted it, I think I should kill myself!"

"You never would see it, Lilian! What am I to say to you? How am I to convince you?"

She nestled the least bit closer to him, and her golden head rested on his shoulder.

He pressed passionate kisses upon her lips, and she suffered him, if this was the last time they two were to stand together as lovers.

If his own welfare demanded that she should give him up surely—ah! surely, she might carry the memory of his caresses—the thought of this one moment of bliss—with her out into the dreary darkness of her lonely future.

"You cannot send me away?" he cried, passionately. "Lilian, you must conquer your pride, and be very merciful to us both!"

She was silent; her strength to resist his will seemed ebbing fast away.

"Listen!" he told her gravely. "I will not take your answer now! I will not listen to your refusal. I will leave you for a month.

"I have to go out of London on important business. I will come to you on my return. Think well over it, my darling; ask anyone in the whole world, and they will tell you the same thing, that for a vain chimera you ought not to blight our lives! I shall tell my sister of your fears; she loved you from the very first dear!

"You know what she is—how generous, brave, and true. If she tells you it will be right to marry me, will you try to overcome your absurd scruples?"

"She will not say so!"

"I think she will. If you send me away, when I return for my answer, do you know what I shall do, Lilian?"

"No!"

"I shall devote my whole life—my whole fortune—to solving the mystery of your birth. I shall make you tell me every fact you know; every trifle that can throw a ray of light upon the puzzle, and then I shall give every effort, my whole strength, to solving the question.

"You will be imposing a cruel task upon me, Lilian; but if you impose it, I suppose it must be done."

"You are angry with me, Guy!" and her hand lingered carelessly upon his white face.

"I think I would rather you were less noble," he said, fondly. "Other men would reverence your scruples. I know the unselfishness which prompts them; but oh! my darling, tell me, how am I to bear them if they rob me of my wife?"

A few tender words of farewell and they parted.

Guy felt as if he could not endure Mrs. Grant's kindly, commonplace talk then. He held Lilian's hand in his as he told her that if he was alive; he should return that day month for her decision.

"But I shall not be here!"

"Where then?"

"At Lady Leigh's," and she explained to him the position she filled at Eaton Square.

"Well, I shall come there then. I am glad you are happy with the Countess; but Lilian, I would prefer you were no one's companion but mine. When do you return?"

"To-morrow. Lady Leigh has spared me all this time because her son came home to spend Christmas with her."

"What, the handsome widower? I will not be jealous of him, Lilian. He is well-nigh old enough to be your father, and they say his heart was buried in his wife's grave."

"I have never seen him."

"Adieu, my best and dearest. Remember, I do not accept your decision as final. I shall come for my real answer in a month?"

When he had gone—when the last echo of his footsteps died away—Lilian felt relieved that her stay in Kensington was nearly over.

After all, kind as Mrs. Grant was, there were a few trying things in visiting the sister of the man she had rejected.

Life at Eaton Square might be more monotonous, but, at least, it was more peaceful.

Guy's second visit she resolutely put out of her head.

Lilian would not even think of it, and all that devolved on it.

She went back to Lady Leigh with an intense desire not to let her mind recur to all the excitement of the day before.

The Countess received her fondly.

"My dear, I have missed you so—I could not do without you any longer! Gerald is here, but he could not quite make up to me for the loss of my little girl!"

It was pleasant to be received so warmly—it was sweet to feel that, nameless and obscure as she was, she had a place in that warm, womanly heart.

Lilian replied gratefully. She took up her old place in Lady Leigh's boudoir, and tried hard to imagine that the events of the last few days were only an idle dream.

She wondered a little when she should see the Earl.

She little knew that his mother dreaded the meeting.

She had sent Lilian away for no other reason than to spare her son's feelings on

seeing the girl's close resemblance to his wife.

Lady Leigh had fancied a very few days at home would suffice her son, but he still lingered, and she missed her little favorite, openly lamenting her absence, until Gerald himself said, carelessly—

"You had better send for her to come back. If you are afraid of my being bothered by her you need not trouble. I can breakfast in the library. I don't suppose I shall even know Miss Green is in the house."

And three whole days passed before he ever caught sight of his mother's companion, and then it came about in this wise. He was returning from a dinner-party at an hour when he knew his mother would be in bed, and he turned into the dining-room expecting to find a fire and lights.

To his discontent cold and darkness greeted him.

"There is a fire in my lady's boudoir, my lord," said the butler, after patiently enduring his master's reproaches; "shall I have the gas lighted there?"

Lord Leigh refused.

"I know the way," he said, surlily. "Another time, remember, this room is to be kept in readiness for me!"

It was but little after ten. He had left the party early, and did not mean to retire to rest for another hour.

He turned the door of the boudoir and entered, well pleased to see the welcome glow of firelight and the soft rays of the modern-tor lamp.

Then it seemed to him that the last twenty years had rolled away and his wife stood before him, young and beautiful as when he parted from her.

He stood as one spellbound. It was his wife!—his Rosamond!—the girl he had loved and married more than twenty years before!

But she looked no older than when he left her!

She was dressed in the fashion of the day.

"Rosamond!" he gasped, as one in a strange nightmare. "What does it mean? My wife—my darling! Have you come back to me from the grave?"

CHAPTER XV.

GUY AINSLIE, the new Lord Earl, went forth from his interview with Lilian under strongly-mingled feelings. He could not be unhappy, when the girl to whom his heart's best love was given confessed that she returned it.

Yet, hopefully as he had spoken to Lilian of tracing her parentage and finding her own name, if she was too proud to come to him without it, he yet felt that it would be a very difficult task.

If his darling persisted in sending him away very many months might elapse before he could stand boldly before her with the news that the barrier between them was removed.

He had not told Lilian of his new honors; of how, instead of being a struggling professional man, he was Lord Earl of Earlsmere.

In very truth, though he had rejoiced in his good fortune chiefly for her sake, he knew it made their course more difficult.

As plain Guy Ainslie the world would have had little wish to dive into the genealogy of his wife.

But now in every peerage must be chronicled the name and parentage of the Countess Earl.

"It is mine," thought Guy, as he went home to Leckenham that winter's night. "Everything Lord Earl possessed is mine as fully as though I had been his son; but if I have to make my choice between Earlsmere and Lilian, between my title and my wife, I know quite well which I shall cast aside.

"I can do very well without a handle to my name, I cannot do at all without my darling. Captain Beaumont and Mr. Martin will have to seek another heir-at-law, and Lilian and I will settle quietly down as Mr. and Mrs. Ainslie."

This decision brought him to his own door; it was now not far from seven o'clock and a strange recollection came to him of that other winter's night not long ago, when returning from seeing Lilian, great news had come to him.

A strange presentiment, intuition—call it what you will—dawned upon Guy that this home-coming also was to be eventful.

He opened the door with his latch-key, and went straight into the drawing-room. His sister sat alone by the fire; she rose abruptly on his entrance, and he saw that she had been crying; her eyes were red and heavy.

"Kate?"

In an instant his hand was on her shoulder.

Very, very tender was the love between this brother and sister.

"My dear, what is the matter?"

"I do not like to tell you," she said, gently; "it will hurt you so."

"I had rather know the worst," he answered, gravely. "I could always bear anything better than suspense."

"Vivian is very ill," and Miss Ainslie's voice broke as she handed a telegram to her brother. It was directed to him, and its seal was unbroken.

Another despatch had come an hour before, telling Miss Ainslie simply that a little heir had been born to the Ducres, and his mother was dangerously ill.

If a man be loyal and true if his nature be warm and generous, however much she may have deceived and injured him, there will always linger in his heart a certain tenderness for the woman who has been his first love.

He may have lost her; they may have been divided for years; another face, perhaps, reigns in his home; but, for all that, he cannot quite forget her, and the news that she is in sorrow or peril must move him deeply.

So it was with Guy, as he read Sir John's brief despatch:—"Come at once, my wife is dying."

He forgot utterly all he had suffered at Vivian's hands.

He remembered her only as the pretty, wilful child he had petted, the beautiful girl he had loved.

He never thought of her treachery and deceit; she was dying, and she had sent for him, must start at once.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Doctor's Ward.

BY E. F. SPENCER.

"MARRY Kitsie!" Dr. Greely cried, pushing back his chair, and staring at his sister in amazement.

"What in the world should any one want to marry Kitsie for?"

"For a multitude of reasons," Miss Dora replied, with a pleasant little laugh.

"You seem to forget, Jack, that she's not a child any longer, and that half the eligible young men in Ballycoyle are in love with her already."

"That's not saying much," the doctor replied, grimly.

"There are only three men in the place that can afford to keep a wife. But what you say about Captain Challoner fairly amazes me. Why—why, he's very nearly as old as I am!"

"Even so, Jack—you're not quite a patriarch yet, you know. Just think for one moment, what brings the captain here day after day, and evening after evening?"

"Well, then, to tell you the truth, Dolly, I rather flattered myself that he came to see me, and play cribbage with me," the doctor replied, looking gravely at his sister. "I did—upon my conscience."

"Then you're a conceited old goose, that's all I can say," Miss Dora replied, laughing heartily at her brother's evident amazement. "Frank Challoner comes to see Kitsie."

"Then he shan't see her any more," the doctor cried, ringing the bell violently. "Here, Bridget, where's Miss Kitsie?" he roared, as an elderly woman put her head in the door, holding the handle to her apron.

"Where would she be, sur, but upstairs—fixin' herself for tay?" Bridget replied, in an aggrieved tone.

She did not like being summoned from the kitchen for such a trifle.

"Then go upstairs this moment, and tell her she's not to come down to-night. No, wait a second—I'll go myself. Or you go, Dora!"

"Bless an' save us, miss, the masther is takin' lave of his sinses!" Bridget exclaimed, still clinging to the door handle; and at that moment Kitsie came tripping downstairs, singing gaily:

"Oh! there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream.

"What do you know about love's young dream, miss?" the doctor said, as she entered the room.

"Nothing at all, Uncle Jack, but what the song says," Kitsie replied, looking at him curiously with a pair of the bluest eyes, shaded by the longest and most defiant black, curly lashes.

"Nothing in the world yet; but sure, I may be wiser some day."

"Hum!" the doctor growled, throwing a triumphant glance at his sister.

"I'll take care you learn none of that nonsense yet awhile."

"Miss Kitsie, jewel, will ye come here one minute?" Bridget called from the kitchen; and when they were alone, Miss Dora stood by her brother's chair, and looked at him sadly.

"I am sorry, Jack, that I said anything about Captain Challoner; but now that we've broached the subject we may as well look it fairly in the face.

"There is no doubt whatever but he admires Kitsie—who could help that?—no doubt, either, but it would be a fine thing for the child if he married her. He is rich, and a thorough gentleman—though not so young as I could wish, perhaps. If anything happened to you to-morrow, what would become of Kitsie?

"While I had a crust she would share it, of course, and Bridget would work her fingers to the bone for her; but it would be a poor prospect for a bright, merry, lovely thing to be shut up in solitude and poverty with two heart-broken old women. Life at best is uncertain, Jack, and a doctor's more so than many people's, going, as you do, in the way of illness every day. Wouldn't it be a comfort to you to know that Kitsie was well provided for, and happy?"

The doctor sat for fully five minutes, gnawing his moustache somewhat savagely; then he took two or three turns up and down the dining-room, and stood looking out of the window for a minute.

The prospect was a pleasant one—a strip of smooth emerald lawn, the white road leading to the village, and beyond, the beautiful blue sea, and the white cliffs of Ballycoyle.

For seventeen years he had associated Kitsie with the sea, with the cliffs, the lawn, the pretty cottage.

How would it all look when she was gone? What a change would take place in their happy home?

How would Dora get on without her loving, constant companion? How would he, Jack Greely, bear the loss?

It was so sudden and unexpected, that he had hardly time to realise what losing Kitsie meant to himself.

He would not think of it. If his grave, handsome, wealthy suitor would win her, let him—he would not stand in her light. He had been everything to Kitsie for seventeen years—once he rescued her, a tiny baby, from the sea, at the risk of his own life, and placed her in her sister's arms.

There had been a wreck off "Old Man's Nose," and the only two persons saved were a tiny golden-haired baby and a Hindoo woman—evidently her nurse—who died a day or two after.

For seventeen years the child had made the sunshine of the doctor's home, the music of his life.

She knew no other friends, was not even aware that she was their niece in love only, and had no claim on either Uncle Jack or Aunt Dora; and now, the first stranger that came by would take her away.

He, or some other—it was all the same, Jack muttered. He would have to lose her, and he might as well make the best of it.

"I suppose you're right, Dolly," he said at length, turning to his sister; "Challoner would be an excellent match for Kitsie, but I never even thought of such a thing, and for the moment I was surprised; of course I must tell him her history, the little there is of it," and then he left the room, with the slow, unsteady step of a man but half awake.

Miss Dora looked after him for a moment in pained surprise.

It slowly dawned upon her that there was something wrong with Jack—something strange in his face, and voice, and manner, and that, somehow, Kitsie was the cause of it.

But she was a wise woman, and knew when to be silent as well as when to speak, only she thought deeply and sadly of the trouble in Jack's honest grey eyes.

After tea, Kitsie sat down at the piano, and played over her uncle's favorite airs, "The Meeting of the Waters," "The Young May Moon," "The Coulin," and other plaintive old Irish melodies.

"Play something else, Kitsie," the doctor cried at last, "something new—something English. I'm tired of the old Irish airs, they're so melancholy."

"Then I'll play you something from Pinafore. I know you like that," Kitsie cried, merrily, and the doctor smothered an exclamation. He hated Pinafore, hated it doubly at that moment for he remembered Captain Challoner had given her the music.

At that moment the captain himself was announced, and after a pleasant evening he rose to go at ten o'clock, his usual time for saying good-night.

But when the doctor accompanied him to the door he lingered for a moment, and then said he should like to have half an hour's conversation, "The fact is, Doctor, I have something serious to say to you, and as I am summoned to England on urgent business, I should like to say it before I go."

"Come into the den," the doctor said, leading the way.

He knew what the captain was going to say quite well, and nerved himself to bear it.

"You must have seen, Doctor," he began, "that I admire your niece, Miss Kitsie, very much. She is very beautiful, artless, and unaffected, and if I can succeed in winning your consent and hers, I should like to make her my wife. I am a rich man, and I do not think you will have any reason to fear for her future if you entrust her to me."

"I believe that, Captain, but I can't answer for Kitsie," the doctor said, a little huskily; "in fact, I have no legal right either to give or withhold my consent, as the child is no relative either by blood or marriage, nor is she my ward in reality. I picked her up, seventeen years ago, when a ship was wrecked off "Old Man's Nose." She has lived with my sister and myself ever since, and is very dear to us both, but we have no right to influence her."

"Still, I am sure she will be guided by your wishes to a great extent: at least, she ought to be, seeing how good you have been to her. At least, give me your consent to try and win her!"

"You have it," the doctor replied: "and if you win her, you will be fortunate. She has a beautiful nature, a sweet temper, a loving heart. Kitsie is largely endowed with good qualities, and she is very lovely!"

Captain Challoner fully endorsed the list of perfections, though he could not help asking himself what some of his aristocratic relatives and friends would say to his marrying a nameless sea waif, brought up by a poor dispensary doctor in a remote little Irish village.

He thought it best not to inquire too minutely into the circumstance of her rescue, better take her just as she was, Doctor Greely's niece, than discover that she belonged to someone more objectionable.

He resolved to discover the state of Kitsie's feelings the very next day—though he had not very many doubts or fears on the subject, she was always so glad to see him, and enjoyed his society so much—and then he would return to London and see what the very urgent business was that his lawyer had written about.

About two o'clock he called at the cottage, with the intention of asking Kitsie to accompany him for a walk on the beach, but he found her alone, curled up in an easy chair, having what she called a good read.

Her uncle had gone to see a patient ten miles off, and her aunt on a shopping expedition to Miltown.

The captain thought he might as well speak there, as anywhere else. For a long time Kitsie did not understand him, when she did, she glanced round with frightened eyes, seeking some means of escape.

"Oh! no, no, please, Captain Challoner; I never thought of such a thing!" she cried, entreatingly.

"But you can try and think of it now, dearest," he said, holding her hands gently.

"I can't, I won't! please let me go!" she sobbed; but he detained her, pleaded his cause with gentle assistance, told her that he knew her history, and pointed out that it was her duty to relieve Dr. Greely of his trouble and expense as soon as she could.

Then he told her of his wealth, his home, his friends—of the new and delightful world open to her. But Kitsie listened in a dull, dazed way, only a few of his words rung in her ears—"You are no relation to Dr. Greely, you are a little sea waif!"

At last she pushed him from her with both her trembling hands.

"Go away, or I shall hate you!" she cried, passionately; "you have robbed me of all I care about on earth; I will never see you, never speak to you again, Captain Challoner; never! never! never be your wife!" and she rushed past him and into her Uncle Jack's study, leaving him to find his way out of the house as best he could.

An hour later the doctor returned. Was that white-faced, trembling little form, looking up at him with such mute, appealing misery, his blithe, bonnie Kitsie?

"My pet, what is it?" he cried, stroking her hair tenderly.

"Come, tell me all about it."

With many sobs and tears Kitsie told her story; how Captain Challoner wanted to marry her, and take her away, and, worst of all, said she did not belong to Uncle Jack and Aunt Dora.

"As if I could ever leave you!" she cried, piteously.

"Oh, tell me it was a cruel, wicked story, and that I am your own very Kitsie! Tell me, Uncle Jack!"

"My pet, it's true we saved you, but you belong to us all the more on that account, and you shall never leave us, dear—never, till you wish to go. Come now, dry your eyes before your aunt comes home, and forget all about Captain Challoner."

But Kitsie, once set thinking, could not forget so easily.

She fretted and worried herself into a serious illness, and then Miss Dora had to take her away for a change, she grew so thin and pale.

But after the first few weeks Kitsie seemed no better, and one day, when the doctor came to see her, he resolved to find out what was the matter.

"Kitsie, what is it?" he whispered, taking both her hands, and kneeling beside her.

"My darling, can't you trust me. Can't you tell me what troubles you?"

"I don't know," she replied, hiding her face on his shoulder.

"But I must know, or I shall go mad. Kitsie, you are not fretting for Frank Challoner, are you? Tell me the truth, darling."

"Jack!"

Only one little word, but it was enough. In another moment the doctor had taken her into his arms, and into his heart for ever, and little Kitsie's worst troubles were ended.

When they returned to Ballycoyle a wonderful surprise awaited them. Kitsie was no longer a sea-waif, but a wealthy heiress.

Her friends at last had discovered her. She had sailed with her father, mother, and nurse, from Calcutta, and their vessel had been wrecked.

They, however, proved that a gentleman and lady and little girl had been on board their brig; and several other circumstances proved that Kitsie was indeed the long-lost daughter of a wealthy gentleman, whose fortune on his death went to his brother, and from him to his nephew, Captain Challoner, his sister's son.

When Kitsie was discovered, the captain honorably gave up the fortune, but neither she nor the doctor would consent to taking all; half was more than sufficient for their wants, for they declare they shall continue to live all their lives in Ballycoyle, only paying an occasional visit to Kitsie's English home.

However, Miss Dora oracularly remarks that the time may not be very far distant when they will change their minds, and for various reasons settle down in England. Kitsie declares, when the time comes, Miss Dora and Bridget must consent to be transported too, and neither seems unwilling.

Meantime, Jack and Kitsie, are enjoying their honeymoon of several moons' duration in the little cottage by the sea, where the doctor learned, all-unconsciously, to love his beautiful ward.

An esthetic society of Cameron, Texas, has concluded to frown upon bangs. A Texas paper conveys the information in these words to those concerned: "The Anti-Bangs Club, of Cameron, has entered its earnest protest against the present style in which young ladies wear their hair. The ladies refuse to be coerced, however, and are quietly waiting to know what the A. B. C. is going to do about it."

A LITTLE leak will sink a great ship.

LOVE.

Love that is true is like the light
Of sun and stars, for ever bright;
Love that is false is like the fire,
The flames that flash, and then expire.

And love that sells itself for gold
Is dear to buy, and cheap to hold:
And love that gives itself for love,
Is light on earth from heaven above.

—S. GRANCELL.

AN ODD WOOING.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKET," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ROSAMOND hurried up the muddy lane her feet winged as it were, by fear. She dreaded being followed by hateful Freddy Brand.

She dreaded as much being overtaken by Lord Kingsford.

"She was a most unfortunate girl," she told herself.

Her past, her whole miserable story was at the mercy of those two men she had left behind her on the common.

How was she to hide herself from them? How escape? Although she hated Freddy with the bitterest detestation, and in her heart could not turn up any very genuine abhorrence of Lord Kingsford, of the two she dreaded him the most.

She felt as if the sword of Damocles were suspended over her head—a weapon that might fall at any moment.

If the worst came to the worst, and she was "shown up," as Freddy had threatened and cast forth from society with pity and disdain, she could cross the seas, and commence another life under another sky. She had but little to tie her to the land of her birth.

Society's pleasures, which she had tasted so fully and experienced in every phase and every form, were beginning to pall; they had never laid hold of her heart, they were merely an anodyne to drown care and memory, and, as such, had been partly effectual.

It was something to be looked upon as a social queen, to be deferred to and admired.

She would not have been human, much less a woman, if she had not had some satisfaction in testing the power of her pretty face, and of enhancing her appearance in exquisite toilettes.

Yes, she liked dress, as all women do; she liked her glass to tell her she was very lovely.

She liked dancing, riding, playing tennis; she liked not a few friends, and some men, in a negative fashion.

Why should this man—this Lord Kingsford, with a mysterious wife, with a strange odd look of Allan—come like a bolt from the blue, and spoil her life, such as it was?

As long as he was in her vicinity she would have no peace.

And as to Freddy, he was unbearable, he was scarcely human (he was, we believe).

She would firmly, but mildly, submit the matter to her mother, and tell her that she would leave the family party, just for the present, and pay a long-owing visit to the next county, to some old family friends—an elderly couple connections of her grandmother's.

Yes, this would be the best plan, she said to herself, as she hurried through the avenue gates.

Of course, her whereabouts would be kept a secret from Lord Kingsford and Freddy.

They would be told she had gone to pay a visit, that was all; no further particulars were to be divulged.

By the time her visit was ended they would have left that part of the country, and she would be relieved from a mental nightmare, especially as regarded Lord Kingsford.

As for Freddy she intended to speak very seriously to his father.

He must be surety for him, if he annoyed her in any way, or used his ill-gotten information.

As far as Colonel Brand was concerned, all supplies should cease, for Rosamond could be fierce and bitter.

She was perfectly alive to the fact that it was her money that provided for Freddy, that had surreptitiously paid paid his racing debts, that fed and clothed him.

She was the goose that laid the golden eggs for the whole family, and she knew it.

The recollection of Freddy's odious threats and hateful familiarity were very present to her mind as she rang a loud peal at the hall-door bell.

She entered the drawing-room, and discovered the very person she wished to see, if she would but strike while the iron was hot, in other words, her stepfather.

He was lounging on a sofa, reading a French novel by the light of the rose-colored lamp beside him, and now and then picking his teeth.

"Oh, it's you, Rosamond," he said, looking up. "What a girl you are for taking a constitutional, and by-the-way, did you meet Fred?" thus leading up unconsciously to the very topic she wished to introduce.

"I met him," she returned, expressively, "and I hope for the last time in my life."

"What the deuce is the row now? What's he been doing?" glancing interrogatively over his yellow book.

"Insulting me."

"Oh, nonsense, nonsense; you must not imagine these little things, Rosamond," in the same tone in which one would humor a sick child.

"It is not nonsense!" indignantly, she replied. "Just listen, and you shall hear," her breath coming very quick and as short as she spoke.

"He met me, told me his coming to escort me was a great compliment, told me he admired me; I was like some trapeze girl he thinks perfect; then he said he was going to marry me.

"He did not even ask me, and that it was not for myself but my six thousand golden charms"—stopping for a moment.

"The dunce! oh, the miserable idiot!" groaned his father, in a low, unintelligible voice. "Oh! the dunce, the besotted dunce!"

"That's not all," she proceeded, quickly, taking off her hat as she spoke; "he was amazed when I declined the honor, and told me that if I did not change my mind he would 'show me up' in all the London clubs.

"He knows my story, of that I am certain, and he means to use his knowledge for the basest purpose. He then endeavored to kiss me, as a seal of this disinterested engagement, but fortunately was prevented."

"By whom?"

"Well, by me, in the first instance, and by Lord Kingsford, who saw that something was amiss, and came galloping up. I left them together!"

"The deuce you did," said Colonel Brand under his breath.

"And now I come to you, Colonel Brand," she said, in quite another tone of voice, "to relieve me wholly of this incubus, your son. I don't mind paying for his living, as I believe I do; he has no means—you have no means."

Colonel Brand became purple. It was the truth.

He had nothing but his debts and a fine taste in cigars, wine, and horseflesh.

"You see, I am frank," she continued. "It is best in the present case to speak plainly. I am a desperate woman. I am driven to bay by your son—and I wish you to understand that I am never (I leave it to you to see to it) to meet him again.

"If I do—if I have to complain of him in any way—it is to you will I look for an explanation.

"He may, as he threatens, drive me out of society. It will not break my heart. Still I shall be very miserable if I have to forfeit the respect of all my friends.

"In that case I shall leave England for the colonies for life, and you know," significantly, "who will be the chief sufferer in that instance.

"One word more. Lord Kingsford is a man I will not be brought into contact with either. He knows all, and uses his knowledge cruelly. I appeal to you to protect me from him as well as your son."

Colonel Brand sat up, put his legs down on the floor, and gazed incredulously at Rosamond.

Could this be Rosamond?—this hard, white-faced, defiant-looking girl, who was laying down instructions, orders, commands to him—Thomas Henry Brand. What had come to her?

He did not fly out in one of his stormy whirlwinds of passion.

He was restrained by her eyes—by the knowledge that she held the purse-strings, and knew it, and, above and beyond all, by the fact that she was Lady Kingsford—a peeress.

How he loved a title!

How he grovelled to a man with a handle to his name, and putting family affection aside (N.B.—he had none for Fred, and no wonder).

Putting interest out of the question, this girl before him was the wife of a Lord.

He could hardly educate his imagination to the fact, but he knew it, and mentally prostrating himself at her feet, promised most confidently, and quietly for him, that all her wishes should be carried out to the letter.

Yes, it was all very fine to send Freddy to the right-about.

There would be no difficulty about that; but what about Kingsford? He would not go.

He was, naturally, firmly resolved to lose no more time—to throw no more valuable moments after the last six years, but to seize the first opportunity of meeting Rosamond alone, and with as much circumlocution as possible, gently bringing her mind back to the past, and awakening her to the fact that he was her long lost husband, Allan Gordon.

Rosamond's aversion to meet him—her intention of leaving the neighborhood, was imparted to him by Colonel Brand in a hurried, crusty, crabbed note, hastily despatched to him by a mounted groom.

"She shall not go to-morrow," said the missive, decidedly; "for I won't spare the carriage horses. It's a long drive, but I'm convinced that neither man or demon will keep her from going the next day, even if she has to walk.

"It's a hunting-day to-morrow. She will probably imagine that you are out with the hounds, and go for a ride about the fields. A nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse. In the fields, between this and Coppersley Gorse, are where you have the best chance of finding her.

Yours sincerely,

J. BRAND."

"If he does not have it out with her to-morrow I can't help him!" said Colonel B. heavily ascending to his dressing-room. "And I'll have it out with Freddy after dinner.

"By Jove! I'll make him understand, once for all, he's no longer going to be an old man of the sea to me. He must shift for himself!

"And now that Rosamond's husband has turned up, where are we going to find an income, I'm bothered if I know, unless he will do the liberal by us, and being a rich man, he ought to!"

But Colonel Brand knew that rich men were often beneath their opportunities in that way, and was very gloomy and very morose when he contemplated his future.

"When would he get any more of that '47 claret?" he said to himself with a groan, as he held the glass affectionately between his eye and the light.

"How could he afford a cook at sixty pounds a year, a cook who knew the peculiarities of his palate and digestion? How was he to afford a couple of clever hunters?

"The only plan he could see was to make up to Kingsford; to give him all his assistance at this critical period, and to trust to his honor and gentlemanly impulses to be remembered afterwards."

With this object in view he sternly refused to allow the carriage horses to take Rosamond a distance of fifteen miles.

Post-horses must be procured, and they could not be got hold of at a moment's notice.

She must wait till next day, and, in an angry whisper, "What was her hurry? Freddy was gone, Lord Kingsford would be hunting.

"He expected to meet him at Byford Cross.

"It was not likely he would miss such a grand scenting morning."

Thus reassured, Rosamond saw him off without any misgivings as to his information, and being, as he had truly observed, a tempting day for a canter, ordered her horse put on her habit, and within an hour was riding out of the avenue gates herself.

She made her way to a long series of charming, big grass fields, with open gates and low jumps dividing them—a kind of sheep farm, and a capital place for a grand gallop.

Rosamond and her well-bred hunter, who was exceedingly fresh, were soon careering along as if they had the wings of the wind, and both enjoying themselves excessively, in their own way.

After a long stretch they drew up, the chestnut the least tiny bit blown, the lady, his rider, with a fine fresh color in her cheeks, at a leisurely walk, along underneath an overhanging brambly hedge, with guarled crab-apple trees springing up through it here and there.

There was no sound around them beyond a faint bleating of the sheep, and a distant barking of a dog.

It seemed the very heart of the country. There did not appear to be a human being within miles.

But hark! What was this sound coming up behind them.

A sound that made Prince Rupert cock his ears and prance along sideways?—the sound that stimulates all horse-flesh, viz., that of another galloping in his wake.

It came closer, and closer, so close that Rosamond quickly turned her head, and saw, to her great annoyance, Lord Kingsford—not in hunting-dress—riding his celebrated mare Brown Duchess, close beside her.

She knew that she was caught—that she would be compelled to speak to him, to listen to what he said, unless she could escape at once by prompt flight.

He was still a little way off yet; so administering the wicked cut of the whip to the truly astonished Prince Rupert, she started off at full gallop, deaf as the traditional adder to shouts of—

"Stop!—stop! Hold on a minute! I've something to tell you."

It was no use.

She was way up the field through the gate, across the next, Brown Duchess and her rider in full chase.

It had a funny effect, these two galloping, as it were, for their lives with perfect gravity; it was not a joke, it was not part of a fox-hunt; it was real, sober, earnest.

Lord Kingsford was putting Brown Duchess along at her best pace.

Prince Rupert was thoroughbred, his mistress was light; fury and amazement at being so harshly struck added wings to his heels.

He was not easy to overtake, and a stern chase is proverbially a long one.

They came now to the first jump, for the gate was closed.

Without a moment's hesitation Rosamond flew the hurdle beside it, and away across the next field; here again another hurdle.

That was left behind with equal ease, also a low hedge.

And now they were approaching the road between which and them lay a formidable stone wall, not a loose stone wall, but one of solid stone and mortar, about five feet high—an ugly jump if the hounds were running—a very ugly jump for anything less than a chaser and pure midsummer's madness for a lady's hunter rather blown and in cold blood.

All the same, the lady was resolved to brave it.

Her intention was discovered by her pursuer, who hoarsely called out—

"For mercy's sake, don't take it, Rosamond! You will be killed! Do you hear me, Rosamond?" urging his horse to still greater exertions.

Rosamond heard perfectly well. Nevertheless she went straight at the wall. Two countrymen on the road saw her coming, and yelled and threw up their hands, thinking it was a runaway, never dreaming that any woman in her senses would face such an obstacle, and with a drop into the high road to follow.

Taking Prince Rupert well in hand, and giving him another sharp cut of the whip, he bounded forward.

It was an agonizing minute for Lord Kingsford.

If he did not clear it and fell back, she would be killed.

If he did, and lost his legs in the road, he would roll on her and her fate would be equally tragic.

But not in vain had Colonel Brand given what he called a stiff sum for Prince Rupert—not in vain had he been advertised as "an extraordinary jumper"—not in vain had he good blood in his veins, and he was Irish.

With a toss of indignation to his forelock, and a suppressed snort, he dashed under the wall and leaped it like a deer.

And then Rosamond paused and glanced back.

"Would, oh, would the other take it too?"

Of course he would. He was willing enough. He came at it fifty miles an hour, but he reckoned without his hostess in Brown Duchess.

She stopped short and reared up perfectly straight. It was really awful to look at her!

She had a fine temper of her own, and was in one of her tempers now. She would not respond to the lead she had been given, not she!

She reared again, and broke a stirrup leather, and very nearly got rid of her rider, who seeing that now it was useless succumbed to his fate. There was no gate near.

The staring yokels glared at the pair. Here was a sight! And what a horse was the chestnut! and a brve girl on his slick back.

The fame of the exploit was carried over all the surrounding hamlets; and Hodge and Giles, over mugs of ale, and benches in little village inns, tell over and over again, the same queer provincial dialect, the story of the lady's leap, and it is pointed out to strangers as a great sight up to the present day.

Her audacious venture had stirred all the blood in Rosamond's veins, and made her bold in other ways.

The wall was between them; he could not come over; he was a prisoner; so she rode up quite close, and said, with a mocking smile—

"I don't think you'll manage it to-day, Lord Kingsford," adding insult to injury.

"No—confound this brute!" he muttered angrily; "but, look here, Rosamond, I must speak to you.

"Why do you run away from me in this manner?" riding up close to the wall, and looking at her reproachfully. "I have something to say to you of the very last importance—it is, indeed."

"I cannot imagine anything that you can have to tell me being of that nature," rudely. "Pray, what is it about?"

"It's about—about"—lowering his voice—"what I was telling you at the ball. It's about Allan Gordon. He—he—has never forgotten you—never!" emphatically.

"Oh, no, certainly not. Who ever dreamt of such a thing?" sarcastically. "I believe you are making all this up for your own purposes, sir.

"If Allan Gordon has never forgotten me where has he been for the last six years? But I will not stop to inquire; and, moreover, I don't believe you know anything about him!"

"One word, Rosamond," eagerly.

"No, no, Lord Kingsford; no more. Just one last word from me," with a gesture of her whip, "and that is"—looking him straight in the face across the rugged stone wall—"good-bye forever!" and, without another syllable, she turned her chestnut sharply round, and galloped rapidly down the road.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ROSAMOND soon disappeared from sight leaving nothing but a sound of sharp clattering hoofs, which gradually died away until their faintest echo was lost; and her husband, muttering valedictions on his horse and his own bad luck, set off in another direction to look for some mode of exit.

The next morning Colonel Brand's predictions were amply fulfilled by his stepdaughter.

She had taken the precaution of ordering post-horses herself, and set forth almost at dawn the following morning, en route to stay at Ravenslea, the old-fashioned country mansion of Sir Everard and Lady Germaine.

They were a curious old couple—rich, eccentric persons, like old Mrs. Dane, and fond of her granddaughter.

Of course they had never heard the terrible story of her "adventure," as we may call it, with Allan Gordon.

They believed her to be an eligible, unmarried, and very hard-to-be-pleased young lady.

She was specially endeared to Sir Everard by her feats in the hunting-field, and was, as he told his wife constantly, "Old Widow Dane's own granddaughter, a real chip of the old block."

Latterly his own performances were restricted to riding to the cover side on a fat, elderly cob, not unlike himself, and listening to the talk of younger hunting men, and following the line by lanes, and roads, and short cuts, and not infrequently being pretty "well up" at the finish, despite his hoary head and eighty winters.

He had a very stout heart still in his venerable body, not like many younger, who cram their fences, miss their second horses purposely, and are only to be seen going remarkably straight and well in their own glowing descriptions after dinner.

Ravensles was a real old place. It dated from the days of Henry the Seventh, and possessed a picture gallery, a banqueting hall, various corridors, dozens of passages and three cornered rooms, and a ghost!

Rosamond arrived early, long before luncheon time, and had plenty of leisure during the day to read just the old lady's knitting, and tell her little bits of news about weddings and such-like going on in the big world from which this old person had faded forty years previously, and to compare hunting notes with the old gentleman.

"My dear," said old Lady Germaine to her young guest, as they sat confidentially over the fire after dinner, "you timed your visit well.

"You know you have carte blanche to come when you please, but this time I am more than pleased to see you.

"We have a big party coming to-morrow for two or three days' pheasant shooting—half a dozen men, and some girls, and married women to help to pass the evenings. Everard is very proud of his battues, not that he ever handles a gun himself; he generally goes down with the party to the warmest corner with his old blackthorn stick.

"You know most of the people, I fancy. There are the Grevilles, the Fullartons, the Vanes, and Lilian and Mary Hope, besides three most eligible bachelors, one of whom we have quite settled for you in our own minds."

"Very good of you, you kind and thoughtful hostess," said Rosamond, with a smile; "but I'm sure I've told you fifty times that I never mean to marry."

"My dear!" irritably, "that's utter nonsense, and you know it's nonsense! A girl with your fortune, your family, your appearance to settle herself down as an old maid! You make me quite angry when you talk such rubbish—you really do!"

"Well, who is this very eligible young man?" returned her companion, indifferently.

"Oh, that is my secret!" complacently. "He is everything that I could desire for you—handsome, young, rich, and well-born.

"It will be a most desirable connection in every way, and I fully intend to make the match. You must look your very best to-morrow evening, my dear.

"I am a great believer in first appearances. Be sure you wear your grandmother's diamonds. They are superb. I don't say they suit every girl, such ornaments, but they become your style."

"I'll wear the diamonds, certainly, to please you; but, remember, I won't promise to fall in love with your charming young man.

"My heart is bullet-proof-case-hardened. If he were Adonis himself it would be all the same."

"Now, now, Rosamond, there's no use in saying all that over again. By the way, my dear, I forgot to explain to you how you came to have our room.

"We have gone to the other side of the house; we imagine it's warmer, and all the usual guest chambers were already told off when we got your note yesterday. We just decided to put you in there, as you are no stranger."

"It's only too big and too grand for me, Lady Germaine; that's all I see about it," replied Rosamond.

"It was not that I was thinking of, my dear. It was it's being rather lonely at the end of the east wing and shut off with those doors, but I know you are not a timid nervous girl, like Mary or Lilian Hope. You have no morbid under-bed-fancies about robbers."

"Not a bit," decisively. "You're not thinking of ghosts, are you?" with a laugh. "I warn you I don't believe in them."

"No, no, I was not thinking of them, and there's nothing for you really to be the least afraid of, in reality. Our ghost," quite gravely, "only walks in summer time, in the long twilight nights when it can be seen," nodding her bobbing curls impressively.

"How thoughtful of it, extremely kind on it's part, I'm sure," decisively: "but, dearest lady, you never mean to tell me that you believe in such things, come, now, honor bright?"

"Yes, my dear, certainly I do! If I had no faith in our family apparition I would not deserve to call myself a Germaine; but putting those sort of things aside, I have a very firm faith in warnings, dreams, broken looking-glasses, falling pictures. Am I not an ignorant, superstitious old woman, in your opinion, Rosamond?"

"I—I—suppose you have some reason for your faith in these things," faltered the young lady, uncertain what to say; "and," smiling, "if you tell me a real, authenticated case, who knows but you may have the honor and glory of converting me!"

"Well, my dear, I'll tell you a dream I had myself when I was your age. I can't do more than that, can I?" preparing for a narrative by poking the fire, and settling herself very comfortably in her chair, whilst Rosamond reached down a feather-hand-screen to conceal (if need be) her incredulous smiles.

"Well, my dear, as I say, when I was your age, or maybe a little younger, I dreamt this dream, with a distinctness that after nearly half a century it still remains branded on my mind as though it happened last night.

"I dreamt I was in a part of the country quite strange to me, and approaching a big country house, I entered it, and, turning to my right hand, went into a large dining-room—a long room with a big window at the end.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Dangerous Guest.

BY E. F. SPENCER.

THE party, though small, was a very brilliant one; and as the night was lovely, and the spacious grounds sprinkled with starlight and flowers, we all emerged from the stately mansion into the open air, and were soon scattered in knots, here and there, enjoying the soft, balmy breezes that were whispering through the Summer leaves, and gazing on the miniature lake in Central Park, close by, that, in the silvery beams of the rising moon, had just begun to sparkle as though it were some gigantic jewel scintillating on the bosom of the landscape.

During the evening I had been presented to several ladies of exceeding beauty and of great wealth, among whom I noted one of such surpassing loveliness that, now, as I chanced to perceive her leaning on the arm of my friend Frederick—the son of our generous host—I thought him one of the most fortunate fellows in the world; for I could comprehend that his heart and that of the exquisite and accomplished creature by his side were entangled in the meshes of the same silken net.

Frederick was a very handsome fellow of about twenty-seven, while Miss L——, or "the beautiful Florence"—as she was sometimes called—had just completed her twenty-first year.

They were engaged in low and earnest conversation as they sauntered close by a secluded arbor to which I had unconsciously wandered, and where I found a solitary seat.

From the denseness of the foliage that surrounded me, they passed without observing me, and left me to a train of thought which I was pursuing, when the entrance of the arbor was suddenly darkened by the figure of a man, who had just darted across the rustic path out of a clump of evergreens.

I perceived at a glance that he was not one of the guests, for he wore thick boots, a slouched hat and a coarse pea-jacket; while a single glimpse of his heavy under-jaw and huge, rough hands, not to speak of his massive, low heap of a form, induced me to steal cautiously from where I sat and conceal myself behind the trunk of a tree, that stood within the leafy grotto.

I had not been secreted there but a few seconds, when the man, who appeared to be intensely watching the young couple who had just gone down the walk, uttered a suppressed exclamation, and the next instant a second figure stood in the opening also.

This time, however, it was that of a woman, beautiful as the day, but with an expression of countenance so fiendish, that, the moment she threw back the hood and revealed her features in the tender luster that fell upon them, I had almost betrayed myself, so great was my surprise.

On making some observation to the man, which I was unable to hear, she suddenly drew him deeper into the grotto, until they both stood within a single yard of me, in almost impenetrable gloom.

Here, after a brief pause, she exclaimed, in a voice which, although suppressed, seemed, terribly cruel and excited:

"Have you seen them? have you seen them? They passed but a few moments since, and alone! Caston, you have deceived me!

"In this remote part of the grounds, which I knew they would seek, you might have done the work from behind securely and without detection, for you could have escaped the moment she fell.

"And here was the point that you yourself selected. How I have been drawn toward the spot I can't tell! Why do you not strike?

"He would not have deserted her to pursue you! After them! man! after them, and avenge me, if you would have wealth and the protection of one who can almost set the law at defiance!"

I was paralyzed, but dared not attempt to move, as I was totally unarmed; for I knew that the desperate villain would make short work of me, if he was aware that I had overheard what had been just uttered.

I therefore determined to remain concealed until I heard the returning footsteps of my friend and his fair companion, or until the conspirators had settled upon some definite plan of action. I had arrived at this hurried conclusion, when the current of my thoughts was interrupted by the ruffian Caston who, in a low, coarse, husky tone, replied to the beautiful demon who had just spoken:

"I should ha' done the work, Miss Clara, but another customer was down the path a little before 'em, that I lost sight on somewhere horesbouts. That's how it is; but there is plenty of time yet. It's not late, and a chance may offer before she leaves. If I could catch her alone for a single moment, all would be right; for let me tell you it's no easy matter when two on 'em's together to do the job clean."

"I must return to the party now, else my absence may attract attention," rejoined Clara. "Tormented with strange forebodings, I seized this cloak and managed to approach this point unobserved. It was incautious, but I could not withstand the fearful temptation. They will return this way, and if they should be alone, strike! All is ready for your escape, and no suspicion can attach to me, as I am one of the guests, and as I have been on apparently quite friendly terms with this destroyer of my peace during the whole evening. If you are unable to avenge me to-night, I shall be at the cottage of the gardener to-morrow forenoon. I must now away."

Once more the entrance of the arbor was darkened by the two figures, that of the lady quickly disappearing, while Caston remained.

On finding himself alone, the villain removed his hat for a moment, disclosing a low, retreating forehead, and a face the most repulsive, which he began to mop with a red pocket-handkerchief.

This latter accomplished, he drew from his bosom a long, shining knife or blade, which flashed for an instant in the moon, and then stepping aside, he concealed himself among the foliage, as if to await the reappearance of his intended victim.

I was, as might be presumed, in a state of the most dreadful excitement and alarm, for here I was in a secluded part of the grounds, with an assassin within a few feet of me meditating a terrible deed, and not knowing at what instant he might dart out and plant his deadly weapon in the heart of Miss L—— once she had passed the entrance of the arbor.

My hope of escape was shut off completely, for it was impossible for me to work my way through the dense sides of the retreat without a noise that would lead to my discovery.

So I kept my eye fastened steadily on the opening, determined, when I heard the approaching footsteps of my friend and his companion, to burst forth from my concealment and apprise them of the danger.

This decided upon, without a moment's hesitation, I cautiously sank on one knee and began to take off my shoes, which, although very light, would still make considerable noise on the gravel.

I had removed one of them, and was about to relieve myself of the other, when my hand touched something cold that was lying on the ground.

I grasped it noiselessly, and found it to be a short crowbar, and had, I supposed, been used in removing stones from the walks.

I was now armed, and, regaining my feet, I stood divested of my shoes, determined to cope with the murderer when the moment arrived.

I was not kept long in suspense, for scarcely had I stood erect with the crowbar in my hand, when the silvery laugh of Florence and the gay voice of Frederick fell upon my ear.

There was slight rustling among the leaves near the entrance of the arbor, and I observed Caston cautiously peering through the opening, while his terrible blade glittered again in the moonbeams.

His back was turned toward me, and as the young lovers were now close by, he seemed preparing himself to spring out from his concealment the instant they had passed.

There was not a second to be lost, for they were already opposite the grotto, and in another moment the murderer would be upon them.

My breath came thick and fast, and before I was aware of my movements I found that I had crept within a single pace of him.

His knife was suddenly lifted above his head, and perceiving that Frederick and Florence had now left the arbor a few paces behind, he stepped forth softly on the grass, careful not to tempt the noisy gravel, and was in the act of stealing upon them, when, with with a swift and terrible blow, I felled him senseless to the earth, while uttering, at the same time a cry for help that reached the lawn near the mansion.

In a moment Frederick was by my side, wild with surprise and alarm, while Florence fell, almost fainting, into the extended arms of the beautiful Clara, who, with several ladies and gentlemen, quickly reached the spot.

Enraged at such perfidy on the part of a woman, I instantly whispered a few words in the ear of the fiendish rival of Miss L——, who had supposed her intended victim stabbed to the heart, which caused her to disappear from the scene with a sudden cry that was inexplicable save to myself only.

In the meantime, and without further explanation, I caused Caston to be firmly bound by some of the servants, and carried, while still insensible, to one of the outbuildings of the mansion, where a watch was set over him, while, taking Frederick aside, I related to him all that had just occured in the grotto, and what a narrow escape Miss L——had of her life.

I thought the poor fellow would have fallen to the earth as I recounted the particulars of the fearful scene.

But, as I was desirous that a knowledge of them should be communicated to no other person for the present, it was agreed that we should present Caston in the light of a robber only, whose career had been arrested summarily.

Next morning it was discovered that the blow received by the intended assassin, although not mortal, had not only effectually destroyed his memory, but left him a harmless simpleton for the rest of his life.

And by four o'clock in the afternoon, we learned that the beautiful Clara and her gentle aunt had sailed for Europe.

In due time Florence was made aware of all the circumstances of the case, when, as may be supposed, we became fast friends.

Even long after her marriage with Frederick, we persisted in keeping the true particulars of the secret among ourselves.

There were reasons for this which need not be explained here. However, as recently I have had the fullest assurance that Clara, which is, of course, a fictitious name, was met with her amiable relative on the Seine, and as I am aware that Caston is the inmate of an asylum for the insane, where he must spend the remainder of his days, the disclosure can now affect neither, while it may, perchance, serve some good purpose.

Scientific and Useful.

RUBBER FLOORS.—The floor of an immense ball room and concert room recently constructed at Margate, the noted English watering place, is of oak, resting on India rubber.

THE OBSCURING OF GLASS.—There are many ways of accomplishing this, some of the plans making the glass permanently frosted, others only temporarily so. For permanence, take a flat piece of marble, dip it into glass-cutters' sharp sand, moistened with water; rub over the glass, dipping frequently in sand and water. If the frosting is required very fine, finish off with emery and water. As a temporary frosting for windows, mix together a strong hot solution of Epsom salts and a clear solution of gum arabic; apply warm.

SHEET-METAL BOATS.—Sheet-metal boats form the subject of a patent recently issued. Sheet-metal sides are bent under pressure to the required shape, having flanges on their lower edges for riveting to the keel-bar, and the stern ends may be joined either with or without a stern-plate. The bent plates forming the boat's sides may be readily packed in small space for transportation, and easily put together on reaching their destination, the design being to so construct boats lighter than of wood or of numerous plates of metal riveted together.

METALLIC CLOTH.—A novel invention is about to be commercially utilized, it is stated, on a considerable scale—namely, the production of metallic cloth, which, if desired, can be impressed with a pattern or printed upon. In the manufacture of this curious fabric the metal intended to be used is rendered into small particles, short or long, according to requirements, and in this form is mixed with a sticky material such as India rubber. Thus prepared it is transferred to goods made from cotton, wool, linen, silk, or other textile, after which the fabric is dried and calendered, or dressed in a suitable manner, so as to produce a smooth, metallic face. The process having thus been carried on to this extent, the cloth can be impressed with a desired pattern by the simple operation of embossing, or the pattern may be printed on its surface in the usual manner. The liquid charged with the metal does not penetrate to the under side, but leaves it quite clean. The finished material is quite soft to the touch and very pliable.

Farm and Garden.

A LOOSE SOIL.—That a loose soil is protection against ordinary drouth has been repeatedly proven. Being a non-conductor of heat it acts as a mulch and keeps soil damp and the roots cool; whereas, the hard, unplowed land is a good conductor and affords no resistance to the access of the injurious heat of the sun. Dew in abundance is very valuable to young plants, and its formation is facilitated by stirring the soil.

WATERING PLANTS.—Don't over-water your plants. Carnations, callas, fuchsias and other fast growing plants, in active growth or coming into bloom, require plenty of water; succulent plants of all kinds, very little; evergreens, merely to be kept moist, and plants being wintered over for next summer's garden, merely water enough to keep them from wilting. If any of your plants are sick keep them dry rather than wet, and never, under any circumstances, give liquid manure or other stimulants to a sick plant.

FROZEN APPLES.—A correspondent writes that apples that have been frozen in barrels, if before they have thawed are treated as follows, will come out bright and clean and look better than ever: Say the fruit in the frozen state is in barrels on the bottom head, remove the top head and enough of the fruit so that the barrel is full lacking one-half of a bushel; then fill the barrel rounding full of clean snow, well packed down; place the barrel in a moderately warm room, and in a day or two they will be all right and better than before being frosted.

CHOOSING HORSES.—The purchasers of horses for the French army always endeavor to obtain a first look at the animal when he is tranquil and in the stable, noting if the animal supports itself equally well on its legs. The eye ought to be more dilated when in the stable than when exposed to full light. If the hollow over the eyes be profound and temples gray, old age is to be concluded. Wounds about the temples suggest attacks of staggers, and when the end of the nose presents circular scars, it may be concluded the horse has been twitched with a cord to insure his quietness while being shod.

FOOD.—The food animals consume modifies the character of their flesh. Turnips yield a peculiar flavor to mutton. The flavor of mutton from sheep that have lived upon the highland is different from that of sheep which have obtained their food chiefly from the lowlands. The garlic of the meadows and some fragrant herbs modify the flavor of the meat. Oily food tends to make the fat soft. Hens partly fed on scraps of decaying meat yield eggs that are at once unpleasant to the taste and unhealthy. Feeding animals for human food is, then, of great importance and demands experience. It is not enough that food makes fat—it should also impart an agreeable flavor.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-FOURTH YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, JAN. 24, 1885.

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THE POWER TO STING.

People have been busying themselves just lately in discussing the stinging habits of wasps, which pester country folk by destroying their fruit, terrifying their children, and occasionally doing some really alarming mischief.

But the many who have entered so ardently into the habits and manners of these winged pests, have quite ignored a race of stingers, of whom it cannot often be urged that they wound in self-defense; nor that they are but short-lived, departing with summer; nor having once stung, they divest themselves of further power to wound, and die.

These creatures have a perennial existence: they carry on their secret warfare all the year round, and from year to year they thrive upon their calling, and with long practice become adepts in the art of stinging.

It is as much an instinct with them as it is with our gaudy-winged foe—nay, more, for the venomous dart is thrust forth for the mere pleasure of stinging, and not as a means of self defence. Nor is there honey to protect. The human stinger is honeyless, busy only in stinging or finding fresh victims to sting; is, in fact, a wasp, and more than a wasp.

The human wasp has more than one dart, but it takes a keen observer to discover where the poison lies hidden. The ever-wagging tongue is its chief agent, but all the members are pressed into its service. The victim can rarely defend himself, for he sees not the dart till he feels the wound. The stinger sustains no injury, but departs to exercise his undiminished power elsewhere.

If science can accomplish most things, can it not help us to exterminate this swarming pest? Perhaps, however, philosophy might better aid us. The human wasp delights in its powers to sting. It rejoices in the throes and wriggles of its victims. Practice stimulates it. It cannot be punished in its own coin, because it is a creature without sensibility, and probably has no vulnerable part.

There is but one antidote. That is, to harden the skin against its thrusts—to present a perfectly toughened article to its barbed arrows. Where the human wasp can make no impression, it soon ceases to sting; for the pleasure of wounding being withdrawn, there remains no incentive. Let him, therefore, who perceives a human wasp fluttering near by, ready to drop upon him, endeavor to present a callous, thick skin to the foe.

But if this should be found impossible, he must for the moment assume the appearance of a disposition other than his own. He must not flinch under the torture, nor attempt to sting in retaliation—thereby betraying his own wound; but must smile unconstrainedly, and so, by indifference, real or assumed, disarm his foe of the power to hurt.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A FAIR as defined by a London paper, is that "for which people make what nobody values in order that other people may buy what nobody wants, all to help an association which badly needs both time and money, and ought, therefore, to encourage in every way the economy of time and money."

—

DENMARK spends $55,000 annually for agricultural teaching. There are dairy schools and schools in agriculture. Improved methods are taken up by every Dane from the King down to the humblest farmer. The consequence is, that this little, cold, barren country is able to export large numbers of excellent cattle, quantities of farm and dairy produce, while their producers are thriving and comfortable.

—

THE Berlin Cabman's Trade Union has started a newspaper, of which the first number has just been published. The life of the Berlin 'bus conductor is not a happy one, it seems. This servant of one of the wealthiest German companies—the share holders of which have good reason to call themselves blessed—works eighteen hours every day seven days a week, bears the full responsibility for every coin that passes through his hands, and is heavily fined for any irregularity. For this he receives a daily pay of about sixty cents. Should the 'bus conductor ever think of going to church, he pays his company for the privilege; should he fall ill, his pay is stopped at once; and as for his meals, he swallows them, such as they are, while waiting for passengers at an omnibus station.

—

THE chemists of the municipal laboratories of Paris now conduct their examinations of food under a strong light, which permits the use of a photographic microscope. In such articles as farina, pepper, sugar, and like dry substances, adulterations thus become very perceptible. The photographs are taken into court, where they are inspected by the judges, who were formerly obliged to rely wholly on the testimony of experts.

—

A PAPER read recently before the French Academy of Medicine, expresses the opinion that one out of every five thousand persons is buried alive. In France, according to a recent declaration of the President of the Chamber of Notaries, the possibility of such a fate is regarded with sufficient consideration to induce one person in every ten who makes a will to provide that effective means be taken to make sure that the testator is dead before burial takes place.

—

THE subject of penny dinners for poor children is agitating London philanthropists greatly at present, and it is urged that if properly managed, and served, they are successful. The dinners are varied and consist of, first day, soup, bread and apple pudding; second, boiled pork and peas pudding; third, meat pudding and vegetables; and, fourth, pea soup and jam pudding. This is the bill of fare at the only establishment so far found where the number of dinners does not fall off.

—

A WRITER in a science monthly says that the practice of taking tea or coffee by students, in order to work at night, is downright madness, especially when preparing for an examination. More than half the cases of breakdown, loss of memory, fainting, etc., which occur during severe examinations, and far more frequently than is commonly known, are due to this. Sleep is the rest of the brain; to rob the brain of its necessary rest is cerebral suicide.

—

THE French Minister of Finance has issued a circular to people in the country, in which he warns them against destroying toads, lady bugs, and insectivorous birds, which he pronounces the friends of the farmer. Toads exist almost exclusively upon the worms and bugs they find feeding on useful plants. The little spotted lady bug destroys plant lice, scale bugs, and other harmful insects. The birds that feed on insects cannot be too well protected. The boy who kills one of these or a toad should be punished, and the man should be fined and imprisoned.

—

BANKRUPTCY is too common now-a-days, and it is often managed with too little publicity for the general weal. They manage these things far better in China, for if a native dealer fails to pay his creditors they all assemble at his house, fortified with their pipes and a goodly store of rice and tea, and there they sit, calmly smoking, sipping and eating till the money is paid. If, however, the defaulter be a European, they post a police agent at his door, and fasten on it a huge sheet of paper on which each creditor writes his name and the amount owed him. It is decidedly uncomfortable to "fail" in the Celestial Empire, and consequently the occurrence is a rare one.

—

THE latest experiments in regard to the painless extinction of animal life have a very great interest for the public. Dr. Richardson has proved that an electric shock is not sufficiently certain, and he has sought for an anæsthetical agent which should make death rapid as well as painless. He has successively experimented with nitrous and carbonic oxides, ether, chloroform, coal gas combined with chloroform, all of which have more or less fulfilled their purpose. At the London home for lost dogs some of the experiments have been satisfactory. A chamber loaded with carbonic acid was prepared for the reception of a cage containing the dogs, and in a very short time they passed from life to death in a profound sleep, without evincing the slightest pain or consciousness. Dr. Richardson has found the same agent, carbonic acid combined with chloroform, successful in putting sheep into so sound a sleep that they can be killed in a perfectly painless manner. It is hoped that in a short time every abattoir and slaughter-house will be provided with facilities for the employment of anæsthetics.

—

THE undertakers of London of every grade have set their face like a flint against the use of coffins from Sweden and Norway. These "bone boxes," made of pine wood, have been recently sent in large consignments to the modern Babylon, filled with matches, toys, bowls, spoons, rollers, chopping-boards and other wooden articles of Scandinavian manufacture that are admitted into great Britain free of duty. Having served the purpose of packing cases, it was thought that they could be disposed of to the poor for coffins at the rate of from fifty cents to one dollar each, a price less than that of the raw material in London. But the undertakers have condemned these cheap coffins as being so insecurely put together and so unsightly as to be unadapted even for pauper funerals.

—

SPEAKING of the House Committee's favorable report to Congress of a bill providing that no alien foreigner shall acquire a title to or own land in this country, an English journal says: "Such laws as this are, of course easily enough dodged, but the proposal is typical of the growing feeling against the holdings of land in single hands, which we have often noted before, and which will assume proportions large enough to startle people a good deal. The citizens of the United States will wake up one fine morning to find half a province, say, owned by a single individual, and will stand it no longer. And when the move comes, it will be the alien who will first feel the force of the storm. Even without raising the general question of England's future position as mortgagee of half the world, one can see how serious is the prospect thus opened."

—

THREE culture on the plains is making rapid progress under wise encouragement by the Government. It is not unusual now to see in naturally treeless regions farmers' and mechanics' homes surrounded by thriving groves. The cottonwood, the tree indigenous to the water courses of the West, is reinforced by the Western catalpa, white ash, white elm, black walnut, locust, mulberry, silver maple, red cedar and willow. A more melancholy example of ruthless cutting down of trees could hardly be afforded than by the naked Tuscan hills of Italy. The reward of this greediness in realizing on their trees has left bare all the mountains, and the result has been a change of climate, freshets, floods and other disasters, entirely caused by the destruction of nature's earth's clothing. So much damage has occurred that stringent laws were lately passed forbidding the destruction of forests at certain heights, and obliging a replanting of land with fresh trees where the old ones have been cut down.

—

ACCORDING to the latest census, there were in 1880—in prisons, penitentiaries, workhouses, houses of correction, jails, and in convict camps, or at work on plantations under the lessee system, 58,600 criminals; in reform schools, 11,468 juvenile delinquents; in insane hospitals and asylums, almshouses, and in private care, 91,959 lunatics; in almshouses, hospitals, asylums, training schools, and in private care, 76,895 idiots; of other defective classes, including the deaf, dumb and blind, either at institutions, at home, or in private care, there are 82,806; of paupers in almshouses, there are 66,203; of "indigent" persons in institutions, including those of children, there are 65,834; the whole aggregate 448,824 criminals, insane persons and paupers in the almshouses. Of these 21,599 are suffering from more than one disease, and therefore counted twice upon this list. The actual number of individuals represented, exclusive of outdoor paupers, is 429,225, or one in every 118.5-10 of the population. Of this vast number 100,626 are children under 16 years of age, and 40,349 are young persons between 16 and 21 years. The proper care of the persons so as to blend restraint with correction and reformation, is one of the most difficult problems presented to philanthropists.

AT THE HELM.

BY WILLIAM MACKINTOSH.

Could all who vow to lead a new,
And better life, at some blessed time,
The veiled and trackless futures view,
They might shun much of woe and crime.

Yet tho' we cannot read the page
The years' long journey way make plain,
We've yet a guide in youth or age,
If we but own its gentle reign.

For they can pass much sorrow by,
Nor let vain folly overwhelm,
While gliding 'neath a smiling sky,
If conscience, ever holds the helm.

Under the Mistletoe.

BY A. H. BALDWIN.

YES, there is no doubt of it, I am a sensitive man. My nervous organization is very acutely developed, my nerves vibrate to the lightest touch, like the clapper of that bell of which the poet so beautifully observes—

"One has not heard the stroke."

So I am not ashamed to confess that when I heard that peculiar rumbling proceeding from the Oriel Chamber, I paused before entering, and sustained that curious sensation in the regions of the heart which all sensitive minds occasionally experience.

It was dusk, to begin with, and darkness always affects my nerves. And the Oriel Chamber was lonely, separated by a long corridor from the inhabited portion of the Old Grange.

Several times while groping my way down the dark shadowy passage, I had felt tempted to return to the light and laughter of the drawing-room.

Indeed, had it not been that I dreaded the ridicule of mischievous Ellice, I should at once have abandoned the enterprise.

Such a place for a lover's tryst! Was it malice prepense or her habitual love of teasing, which guided Ellice in her selection of such a weird rendezvous? Was it possible she imagined that I should be afraid?

For there was a legend attached to the Oriel Chamber. A legend which told in the light of day by Ellice's rosy lips, had strangely shattered my delicate nerves.

Now as the shadows closed in round the lonely room, it recurred to my brain with a hideous pertinacity not to be checked.

Centuries ago a monk was confined in the Oriel Chamber. It was the time of the Plague.

One by one his gaolers died around him until he was left alone, unconscious of his fate, a prisoner in a Palace of the Dead.

None ventured to approach the tainted spot. The room was bare—bare walls, bare floor; only the iron coal-box, with its stock of winter fuel, stood by the desolate hearth.

By-and bye, as the pangs of hunger increased, the monk had recourse to the scuttle. As the gourmand feeds upon a ragout, so he fed upon his coals.

Coals for breakfast, coals for dinner, coals for tea; then, when supper-time came the box was empty, and the monk died. Died on Christmas Eve.

"Ever since that day," quoted Ellice, with one of her mysterious giggles, "the monk may be heard each Christmas Eve meandering about the Oriel Chamber, crunching nobs of Silkstone between his teeth."

It was a hideous legend; and knowing my nervous temperament, Ellice should never have related it.

But Ellice has no nerves, none whatever. She never considers my feelings, and yet how my soul burned within me when she agreed to meet me, e'en though she had added with a mischievous glance,

"On Christmas Eve in the Oriel Chamber."

All the afternoon I had spent gathering mistletoe, arranging it in a massive festoon, gorgeous to behold, over the mantelpiece; twining it round the old oak chest, wreathing the pictures, and weaving a bower of greenery for my love.

It had not seemed gloomy then, peopled with visions of Ellice's dark head, liquid eyes, and rosy, pouting lips. But it was daylight then, and now because the light had failed was I to be afraid to——?

No, I was not afraid! How dare you insinuate such a thing? Sensitive, nervously sensitive, I am as you know; but a coward! Never! away with the vulgar word. With a sudden effort I pushed open the heavy door, and entered the apartment.

A lamp burned dimly on a distant table, its dull light only rendering more visible the darkness which crouched menacingly in the corners, and sprang out upon the unlawful guest.

For a moment I peered into the gloom with my short-sighted eyes and could see nothing, the next moment I saw my Queen.

She was kneeling upon the hearthrug, though there was not the vestige of a fire in the grate, draped from head to foot in a simple black robe, black mittens covering her dainty hands.

Over her head drooped the delicate leaves of the mistletoe bough. Do you believe in omens?

I do. Hastily I sprang forward to perform the ceremony connected from time immemorial with the sacred mistletoe.

"Queen of my soul," I shouted joyously, "awaitest thou me?" But, alas! I was to pay dearly for my impetuosity. Slowly she raised herself into a horizontal position, leisurely she regarded my agitated frame.

"Eh—h?" she observed doubtfully, after a prolonged interval, "I don't suppose I be waiting for you. I don't seem to think as ever I seed you afore!"

I sighed. That was just like Ellice. She was always mimicking some one. Like that idiotic fellow Hook, when she could not "take off" any one else she would take herself off, which generally happened whenever I endeavored to beguile her into a few minutes' serious conversation. But it was too trying of her to behave so childishly when she must have guessed.

"Ellice, my star!" I murmured plaintively, "what words are these? Accountest thou the devotion of a lifetime nought? Doubtest thou the identity of thy adorer?"

"Stand back, sir!" she interposed angrily; for in my zeal I had pressed closer to her side, and was endeavoring to possess myself of her hand: "bless the man," she continued, *sotto voce*, "he must be crazy!"

I sprang backwards, whether in obedience to her behests, or for some more potent reason I am unprepared to divulge. I felt completely bewildered by my reception.

This was not what I had been led to expect. Coy she had been at first, and wilful, provoking always, nevertheless, I had nourished a secret belief that my love was not unrequited: moreover, whatever she might say to the contrary, she had agreed to meet me in the Oriel Chamber.

How I wished I could see her face! In vain I strained my eyes in a useless endeavor to pierce the gloom which surrounded her; only the outline of her shadowy form, and the gleam of her dark orbs fixed upon mine, rewarded my efforts.

The cold grew more and more intense, the stillness more profound. I shivered with a variety of emotions which I do not intend to describe too minutely.

"Perfidious jester!" I ejaculated, "canst thou not choose some more befitting hour for thy buffoonery? Avaunt, rude mirth? Turn, sweetest Ellice, ever dear, thine own, thy love-lorn Edgar's here, and bids thee seek with him the shelter of the drawing-room."

"The drawing-room!" she shrieked hysterically; "I think I see myself there! Ha, ha, ha. Well, I never, sir! You be a rum customer!"

I groaned aloud. She really was incorrigible. One might almost believe she was possessed.

Already she was as hoarse as a raven; those harsh, gutteral tones were as unlike Ellice's silver accents as a drum to a tuning-fork.

She would take cold; she would be ill; we should both be ill; cold always affects my nerves, and Mrs. Oldham would declare it was all my doing. I decided to make a last appeal.

"Beloved, but brutal Ellice," I entreated, "canst thou not curb that mocking spirit?—canst thou not constrain thyself to listen to the dulcet words of affection my heart yearns to express? Thou knowest the tender question that I fain would ask. Prithee, jibing maiden, wilt thou marry me?"

Breathlessly I awaited her reply. It came in the gruffest tones I had ever heard from those rosy lips:—

"Well, of all the fools as iver I see, you be the biggest!"

I was horror-struck! Was it possible she had suddenly become insane? As if in answer to my unspoken thought, she began to make wierd, cabalistic signs at the empty grate.

Instantly the unearthly noise which had tortured my nerves as I groped down the dusty corridor reverberated through the room.

I shuddered. Yes, it was true, that hideous legend which Ellice had related; the noise was precisely similar to the rumble of coals ejected into the cellar regions.

It was too much. As I said before, I have a most delicate organization. For one moment I hesitated, then—I fled.

My hand was on the lock; in another moment I should have been in safety, when, suddenly as it commenced, the noise ceased.

I looked round. Ellice had risen to her feet; the light leaves of the mistletoe gleamed through the darkness, as it hung its dainty foliage over her head.

One mittened hand was stretched towards me, as if entreating my pardon, while in a voice which fell like music upon my troubled spirit," she murmured apologetically——

"A Merry Christmas, sir,"

With one bound I was at her side.

"Imperial Ellice!" I shouted, exuberantly, "Scheherazade of story-tellers, Malibran of actors, Czarevna of jesters, thou art mine at last!"

I clasped her in my arms; I pressed my kisses upon her cheek.

For an single instant I was conscious of a peculiar suffocating sensation which bewildered me—the next, I lay prone upon the naked floor.

A peal of laughter rang through the haunted chamber. I gasped for breath. Could it be Ellice's fairy-like hand that dealt the fatal blow which left me writhing in anguish upon the bare boards?

I leaped to my feet. There stood Ellice—mocking, heartless Ellice—peeping in through the open door, and laughing like a veritable fiend at my discomfiture.

Brilliant rays from the lamp she carried in her hand irradiated the dingy room with its welcome light, and shed a golden halo around her graceful figure.

"Oh, Mr. Aglionby!" she shrieked, breathlessly, "I quite, quite forgot to tell you that mother had ordered the sweep!"

The sweep! I was petrified. I glanced hurriedly at the firewood. What did I behold?

There, where my ardent fancy portrayed the dainty form, the floating robes, the liquid eyes, of the queen of my destiny, knelt, engaged in his sooty avocations, the sweep! And he was grinning!

"Thought there was a summut up," he chuckled; "seemed to know my name, but mistook my profession. James Ellis, sir," he continued, with a suggestive pull of his shaggy forelock, "chimney-sweep and——"

But I had fled.

My cup was full to the brim. Not only had my nervous organization been perceptibly shattered by a fabulous legend which, Ellice afterwards confessed, existed only in her fertile imagination, but I had vowed undying affection for a sweep!—I had made an offer of marriage to—the sweep!

Finally, beneath the mystic protection of the faithless mistetoe, with all the ardor of a first attachment, I had clasped in my arms and kissed—the sweep!!!

The Last Bargain.

BY CHARLES REED.

FRIENDS on both sides shook their heads when Harry Lester married Minnie Blake.

True, the match was a suitable one in many respects; the young people had known each other from childhood, were devotedly in love, equals in age, in rank, in fortune.

This last equality was rather an unlucky one, however; for neither Harry nor his bride were rich; and their advisers held that each should have selected a mate better endowed in this respect, instead of putting their two small incomes together. "Minnie ought never to have married a poor man;" "Harry should have looked out for a wife with money," was the cry of those friends and relatives, who always appear to consider it a duty to challenge the prudence of other peoples' matrimonial arrangements.

"If Harry and his wife had been poor all their lives," said the opponents of the marriage, "they would have found it easier to begin housekeeping on a very moderate income;" they were both leaving comfortable, if not luxurious lives, for their own humbler nest.

Harry was a younger son of a country Squire; and, up to the time of his father's death had enjoyed an allowance which agreeably supplemented his salary in a Government office.

Now the old Squire was dead, and the eldest son, who had succeeded to the property, did not see the necessity for assisting the younger members of the family after his father's liberal fashion.

And this was the time Harry took into his head to marry, and to marry Minnie Blake, of all people.

Minnie, who had been adopted and educated by a wealthy old aunt, and taught to consider herself as the old lady's heiress, until Minnie's father unluckily quarrelled with the old dame a few weeks before her demise—a quarrel which resulted in Minnie's abrupt return to her family circle, and the benefiting of various charities by the money which should have been hers.

It was a disagreeable change for the poor girl; and her old playfellow, Harry, thought that he could offer her a happier home than she was likely to find under the paternal roof, with an irritable father, an ailing stepmother, and a brood of spoilt children.

Minnie thought so too, and the young couple married, and appeared likely to set all the dismal prophecies regarding their future at defiance; they were so extremely happy.

Only one cloud rested on their home. Minnie was well aware that Harry's friends had not been chary of their warnings regarding his rashness in marrying a girl "of expensive tastes."

"Minnie Blake had always been accustomed to a carriage and a lady's-maid—how do you suppose she will accommodate herself to living in a small house and keeping only one servant," cried the croakers.

In point of fact, Minnie, like a sensible woman, readily adapted herself to the change in her circumstances, but the warnings of the croakers rankled in her mind, and she was nervously anxious to show that, despite her luxurious upbringing, she was as careful a manager as if she had always been accustomed to live upon a minute income.

She studied economy as a fine art, she devoted herself to the care of her household concerns.

There was really little need for all this anxiety; Minnie herself was not penniless; Harry's income, though small, was an increasing one; and they had set up their establishment on so modest a scale that they might have been extremely comfortable on their means.

But the saving mania had taken possession of the young wife, and in her dread of being extravagant she was inclined to fall into the opposite evil.

She was so good, so self-denying, so lovable even in her absurdities, that Harry had scarcely the heart to complain; but he often secretly hoped that after a time this rage of extreme economy might wear itself out.

Mrs. Lester had formed a small library of works on domestic management; collections of cheap cookery recipes; advice as to how to make £200 a year do the work of £300.

She studied these till her head ached, and the results of her studies was not always satisfactory.

Harry unfortunately proved that he possessed a more fastidious palate than the authors of the cheap recipes appeared to enjoy; for, though the cookery books assured her that "nobody could detect" the substitution of white of egg for cream, or of dripping for fresh butter, Harry was instantly aware of economical deceptions.

Then, with all her care, Minnie could never succeed in obtaining a servant at the rate of wages specified in the books of advice; nor could she discover tradespeople to supply her at the prices these works assured her she ought to pay for provisions.

It was scarcely more helpful when she took in periodicals in which thrifty housewives occasionally publish the amount of their weekly bills, for the envy and instruction of their neighbors.

Sometimes she sat ashamed and humiliated to read that a lady with a far larger household than her own spent so much less in weekly bills; but next week the illusion would be destroyed by the fair housekeeper (in reply to a shoal of indignant letters declaring that her figures must be wrong) naively remarking, "of course, I did not reckon in the price of our poultry, or milk, or butter, or fruit, and vegetables, as we get all these from our own poultry-yard, dairy, and garden."

Excess of this kind rather shook Mrs. Lester's faith in the estimates people gave for expenditure.

"Economy's a very useful broom,
But should not ceaseless haunt about the room,"

was Harry's unspoken thought during the first months of his married life.

Due prudence was necessary and praiseworthy, but he wished Minnie would think and talk of something else besides their weekly expenditure.

He and his wife were both persons of cultivated tastes; and, before their marriage, Minnie had been a most conversational and delighted companion, but she now appeared to consider it a sacred duty to drop all interest in art and literature, and to devote herself to "looking after the house," as she phrased it.

If she went out, she returned home not, as of yore, full of entertaining observations on what she had seen, or of amusing anecdotes which she had heard.

Like the barber at court she only observed that, "the King was marvellously well shaved."

Mrs. Lester only noticed what bore on her peculiar hobby.

"Yes, I went to the Williams' at-home: there was some very good music, I believe, and Professor —— was there; but I do not know much about it, for I was most of the time in the tea-room talking to such a nice old lady, who gave me some useful hints in housekeeping; and oh, Harry, I find I can get cheese a penny a pound less at a shop in the City, so I shall always go there in the future."

"You don't mean to say that you stayed chattering to an old woman about cheese when one of the first pianists of the day was performing upstairs, and Professor —— whom you wished so much to meet, was expecting to be introduced to you. I met Williams this morning, and he said how disappointed he and Mrs. Williams were that you never came in till all the best of the performance was over, and the pleasantest people gone away."

"But I obtained useful advice, Harry."

"Useful rubbish. I don't suppose we eat a pound's worth of cheese in a year."

"But I was talking about servants, too, Harry. About Jemima's holidays."

Harry stifled a groan. Was his clever accomplished little wife to come to this!

Were household bills, and Jemima, to form the staple of conversation out of doors as well as at home?

It was not that Minnie's taste ran naturally to such topics; she had only fallen into a common mistake with young and zealous housekeepers.

Fearing to neglect domestic duties, she gave them an undue share of her attention, as some tender-hearted step-mothers overindulge the children of the first family, under the fear that they may be accused of harshness to their adopted brood.

One of Mrs. Lester's economical hobbies was a passion for buying bargains. Against this mania Harry openly rebelled; his experience being precisely that of the husband in the "Spectator," who complains that his income can hardly support the expense of his wife's "economical" (?) purchases.

"With all her contrivances I could never find that we grew a penny the richer," writes the Vicar of Wakefield of a similarly notable helpmate; and Harry's experience was that a succession of "wonderful bargains" was likely to make him many pennies the poorer.

Against all argument, however, Mrs. Lester was as adamant.

When the love of bargain-buying once takes possession of its victim, it is difficult to break the spell.

Cold reasoners may prove that loss of time and expense of conveyance, make the cheap articles purchased at a remote distance more expensive than the slightly higher-priced ones procurable at a shop close at hand.

They may show conclusively that things which are not required are always an extravagance, however cheaply purchased.

But what avails argument against the delight of securing "an undoubted bargain."

"You may laugh, Harry like the man in *Punch*, who says his wife paid 3s. for a cab to go to the store, and spent 2s. there for lunch, and saved 6d., and called that economy.

"But I am not so silly as that. Remember that a bargain I made, at that City shop last week. I only spent 4d. for an omnibus and I am sure I saved a shilling."

"Was not that the day you spoilt your new velvet bonnet because your hands were too full of parcels to hold up an umbrella?" asked Harry, wickedly; "and do you remember darling, those wonderful bargains you bought at the sale you would go to, and bid for yourself; and the adventure you got into down by the Docks, when you lost your way, and had your pocket picked while you were hunting for some wholesale warehouses; and that marvellously cheap silk dress which was all spotted in the middle of the stuff?" but Minnie had retreated with a murmur, "Oh, you men never understand these things."

"I begin to think economy is very expensive; I'm sure it's very uncomfortable," sighed Harry.

In his bachelor days Harry had been wont to bestow his cast-off garments on sundry ancient pensioners of the family.

Winter drawing near, he announced to Minnie that he should order himself a new greatcoat; and that the old one might be forwarded in due course to an old servant. "Or, by the way, if you know of anyone who wants a coat particularly, they can cut out old Jem this time," remarked Harry, "for he doesn't really need a coat this winter, and there is so much distress everywhere. I daresay our parson's wife could tell you of twenty poor folk who would be glad of a warm wrap."

Minnie looked grave.

"Oh, yes, of course; but, Harry, don't you think it is rather extravagant to give it away. Mrs. Gray called her yesterday, and was telling me that she makes quite a nice little sum a year by selling all their old clothes. Now we ought to be as careful as possible."

"Mrs. Gray is an old skin-flint," interrupted Harry, angrily, for it was a new thing for Minnie's economies to trench on her charities.

"Hang it, Minnie, we're not so poor that we can't spare a worn-out coat to a beggar."

"A man called here yesterday with some beautiful flowers to sell, pursued the careful housekeeper.

"I told him I could not afford to buy them, and he said he would have taken old clothes in exchange. He had given all those pretty chrysanthemums in the balcony opposite in exchange for old boots."

"I will not have any old boots,—not their value, stuck up in our balcony as an advertisement to our neighbors," said Harry, resolutely.

The subject dropped. Harry's new coat came home, and Harry again spoke of the disposal of his old garment.

Minnie promised to "see about it," and really intended to consult the clergyman's wife about finding a recipient for it.

But it happened that that very afternoon Mrs. Lester was "stock-taking" downstairs; an investigation which revealed that terrible havoc had taken place among the kitchen crockery; Jemima being a young woman euphoniously described as "unfortune" in her treatment of brittle articles.

"It is shameful—dreadful—not a single jug remaining," sighed Mrs. Lester; and at this moment arose a chant of "pots, pans, crock'ry-ware," in the street.

"Perhaps that man would sell me something cheap," said Mrs. Lester, reviving at the prospect of a bargain; "just call him, Jemima."

The china-merchant proved as obdurate a bargain maker as Mrs. Lester, and much haggling ensued.

"It's a cold day, ma'am, for a poor fellow to be pushing about a heavy truck," pleaded the itinerant seller of crockery, at last.

An idea struck Minnie's careful mind. "Suppose I offered you a nice greatcoat in exchange?"

"Well, mum, that depends what sort of coat it might be," was the hesitating answer; but the man seemed "inclined to trade," as they say.

Mrs. Lister had a twinge of conscience; was it not rather a stingy action—but then this dreadful havoc among the crockery: and perhaps the clergyman's wife would only give the coat to an undeserving object.

Running upstairs she pulled down the coat from its peg in Harry's room, and offered it to the man before her economical principles should be worsted in the mental conflict.

"There! what will you give me for that?"

The man had been so hard to deal with hitherto, that Mrs. Lester was rather surprised at the selection of articles he set aside in exchange; but he left her time for wonder, for muttering something at "being in a hurry," he caught up the coat, threw it on his barrow, and rapidly disappeared.

"That was a great bargain, at all events," said Mrs. Lester, complacently.

"Where is my new coat, Minnie?" said Harry a few days later. "I shall be obliged to go out this evening to see old Uncle Ned, and I never care to call there looking shabby, as if I was throwing out hints for presents."

"Your coat is in the cupboard in your room, dear," replied Mrs. Lester; "and, by-the-bye, Harry, Jemima has been so dreadful careless with the crockery, I could never afford to replace all her breakages at a shop; so, as I had a chance of getting useful things in exchange for your old coat, I did so. If you were to see the *heaps* of things the man gave me, I am sure you would say I had made a good bargain."

"I hope the valuable exchange came to at least six pounds," said Harry, dryly.

"Six pounds, Harry, how silly; who would give that for an old coat?"

"Perhaps not, my dear; but as my old coat is laying upstairs, and my new one has vanished, it appears to me that it is the article for which I have just paid six pounds which has been economically trafficked away for jugs."

"Nonsense," screamed Mrs. Lester, rushing upstairs.

But it was only too true; another bargain had proved delusive.

In her haste to secure the crockery, Mrs. Lester had brought down the wrong coat; and the china-seller had not, of course, undeceived her.

It was an expensive incident, but Harry never regretted it. It seemed to open Mrs. Lester's eyes to the folly of her mania for bargains.

She acknowledged that the frenzy for cheapening did not always result in actual economy.

Gradually Harry had the satisfaction to find that domestic cares were falling into their due perspective; that Minnie could conduct her household with prudence, and yet spare a little thought and interest for outside matters.

Perhaps Mrs. Lester's bargain was not such an unfortunate one after all; for it taught Minnie a useful lesson.

A Favor of Fortune.

BY A. H. BALDWIN.

JASON HALL, a quaint, old castellated structure, of the time of Queen Elizabeth situated upon the coast of Essex, and overlooking the English Channel, was the seat of Admiral Sir Thomas Strout, a rough, robust old English sailor, who flourished during the latter part of the last, and the beginning of the present, centuries.

Originally the place had been called an abbey.

The Admiral had given it its present name in honor of the old Jason frigate, on board which he had served as post-captain when it was the flagship of England's sailor-King, William IV., then Admiral, and Duke of Clarence.

In 1832, the time of which we write, Sir Thomas, grown old and battered in the service, had been honorably retired upon full pay.

He was never so happy as when he could induce old shipmates to share his hospitality.

Admirals of the Red, the White, or the Blue, were all gladly entertained by Sir Thomas, post-captains were always welcome; and even a commander, if his war-record was good, might find favor in his sight.

But lower than that he did not like to go. In fact, he was an aristocrat of the first water—the very saltest of the salt; and he would sooner have admitted to social equality the boatswains and the gunners of the old school than to have admitted a lieutenant of the new.

The only near relative which the old Admiral had was a granddaughter, whom he came very near to worshipping.

His wife, had died when quite young, leaving only one child, a beautiful girl, whom the proud father was wont to declare was the handsomest, and the best, and the most intelligent girl in the kingdom.

She, rather late in life—her father having kept the general run of lovers at a distance became the wife of an earl, but the earl was so poor that when he died, only five years after his marriage, he did not leave behind him the wherewithal to pay his debts; the result being that Lady Irene, the Admiral's daughter, came home to her father, bringing with her an infant daughter—the little Lady Emeline.

At the time of the opening of our story Sir Thomas's daughter had been dead several years, and the Lady Emeline had grown to a beautiful maiden of nineteen, with a character that lacked nothing to make it lovely and lovable.

And she had a lover—a young lieutenant of the royal navy—named George Ayling. He had come first to Jason Hall, having been sent with a message to the old Admiral by the Board of Admiralty.

On that occasion he had to remain all night, and Sir Thomas had detailed Lady Emeline to entertain him.

He was a brave, loyal, true-hearted man; twenty-six years of age; tall and strong and handsome—so handsome and so genial and so pure-minded and his beautiful young hostess fell in love with him during that first visit.

He was attached to the Naval Department at Whitehall, being on the staff of one of the Lords Commissioners.

His father was only a merchant, but one of the most wealthy in London.

In fact, few men had more influence at Court than had the elder Ayling, he having been a lifelong friend and devoted helper of the present King; and he never obtruded himself.

The only favor he had ever asked had been in behalf of his son.

Lieutenant Ayling had fallen desperately in love with Lady Emeline; and at length he told her of it; and he told her so heartily and so ardently, and so lovingly, that she could not keep back her own confession, but said, "Oh, George! my love! my heart is all your own now."

But when he talked of speaking with her grandfather she trembled.

She knew the old Admiral's whims and inconsistencies, and she feared he would oppose their union.

"Fortune favors the brave," said George, laughingly. "Faint heart never won fair lady. I shall board the tiger in his den. Surely he cannot eat me."

And, on a certain afternoon, when the lieutenant had brought down a packet from the naval office, and had seen and spoken with his darling, he approached the old Admiral in his sanctum sanctorum, and told of his love for the beautiful Emeline, and boldly asked the veteran for her hand. What a shock was that for the British Admiral! At first he could not credit the evidence of his senses.

It could not be possible that he had heard aright. And the ardent lover stated his case a second time—stated it so that there could be no mistake. And then the wrathful torrent burst forth.

What! A lieutenant! son of a London merchant! a mere nobody! a stripling who had never smelt powder! who never had even seen a fleet put in line-of-battle! marry with HIS granddaughter—the daughter of an earl!

And so he went on to the close; and the close was this:

"Get out of my house, sir! Get out, sir! And don't you dare to speak with the Lady Emeline again! You! *You!* You! marry with the granddaughter and heiress of Admiral Sir Thomas Strout! By Heaven, if she should do such a thing as listen to your tale of love, I would—would—I don't know what I should do; but, if she should marry with you, I'd cast her off on the instant! Now, go! I think you have your answer!"

The young and gentlemanly lieutenant was thunderstruck—utterly astounded. He gazed upon the foaming old tiger as he might have gazed upon a South Sea Islander gone mad.

"Well, sir, d'you hear me? Why don't you move? What are you waiting here for? I don't think you've got any more to say!" blustered the irate Admiral, while the extraordinary rush of blood to the head gave to his rough and puffy face a color purely crimson.

"Only this, my dear sir, for the present," returned Ayling, mildly and modestly, and bowing politely.

"I would like to know, sir, through you, if the specimen of speech and behavior which I have just witnessed may be taken as a fair sample of the life and intercourse of the quarter-deck of the historic and heroic days of his Majesty's royal navy?"

Having thus spoken, he bowed again very low, and then turned to leave the room, passing out under a torrent of abuse.

On the broad piazza George met the Lady Emeline.

When she saw his face she caught him eagerly by the arm, and asked what had happened.

He told her as nearly as he thought proper.

"Oh, George, dear heart, I feared it—I feared it! I have been in a fever of anxiety all the time you have been gone. What shall we do—alas! what?"

"Never surrender, my own dear promised one! Let us consider. We will take time. I have friends in London who will gladly help us. At all events, we won't give up the ship just yet."

Her lover's strength and heartiness, his confidence in right and justice, and his masterful manner in speech and purpose, soon brought the sorrowful maiden into a more hopeful state; so that when he left her he left smiles upon her face.

The lieutenant, since his interview with Sir Thomas, had resolved to return at once to London.

The stage-coach from Shoreham to Chichester would pass shortly, and his nearest way from the Hall to the highway was through the great park.

He had struck into the well-beaten path, and had gained, perhaps, half the distance, when he was brought to a sudden stop by a scene that commanded at once his earnest sympathy.

An elderly gentleman, who had evidently been on his way to the Hall, had been attacked by a savage stag that had broken loose from the deer-park.

Ayling well knew the nature and disposition of this animal, as he had once had a bout with him on his own account.

He was one of the largest of his class; literally, "a monarch of the glen," which had been sent to the lord of the manor from the Highlands of Scotland.

His widely branching antlers were of enormous size, and the man who should once get fairly caught thereon might calculate upon a speedy exit from this sublunary sphere.

The individual attacked was certainly more than three-score—perhaps nearer to three-score and ten—habited in a sort of undress, free-and-easy naval uniform; naturally, one would judge, a pleasant-faced old man; but just at present so excessively frightened that marks of character might go for nothing.

When our hero discovered him he had dodged behind a large oak tree, while the stag stood ready for a charge on the opposite side.

Ayling saw in an instant that when the stag should make another onset it would be next to impossible for his victim to escape; and if the infuriate beast once reached him, what could save him?

The brave youth hesitated only long enough to fully grasp the situation. He had great confidence in h s own physical strength, and he believed he could throw the animal from his feet.

At all events he would not see a defenseless old man killed before his face, while he had strength and sense to make an effort.

He took a critical view of every point, and then, with a bound and yell leaped forward.

Exactly how he did it he could never tell. He caught the branching antlers, at the same time striking with heavy force against the stag's shoulder; then with all his strength, twisting the head backward, and drawing it towards him, while he struck his foot with a solid kick against the leg nearest to him.

The effort was successful. He brought the stag down upon his side, driving his nose into the gravel, and pressing his knees upon the neck and shoulder.

Then he shouted to the old gentleman to run. There was a gate not ten rods away, which he could easily reach.

"Run for the gate, and I will follow," was his command; and the old man had sence enough to obey; and when he had almost reached it, the lieutenant sprang to his feet, and sped after him; and before the demoralized beast could recover his senses both the men were safe.

"Well, young man, you have saved my life. Don't you think so."

"I certainly think, sir, that I saved you from a great danger."

"Ay, you saved my life. Who are you?"

Ayling was well satisfied that the old gentleman was nothing less than a retired admiral, and he respected him accordingly.

"I am George Ayling, sir, a lieutenant in his Majesty's navy."

"Are you the son of Arthur Ayling, the London wine merchant?"

"I am, sir,—his only son."

"Ay,—I remember; I gave a word for him to the Admiralty when he was seeking to get a place in the navy for his boy. Really, I am glad that I have met you. And now what are you doing here."

It struck the youth that if this man had influence, and was at the same time a friend of Sir Thomas, he might possibly help him; so, in a very delicate and modest manner, he told the whole story—told of his love for the beautiful Lady Emeline—of her love for him, of his late interview with Sir Thomas, and of the result.

The old man laughed outright.

"Oh, the old sea-dog! What a growler he is! But, young man, do you come with me. By St. George! I'll give old Tom a piece of my mind. Come along; I won't let him eat you."

Ayling hesitated but for a little time. His aged friend seemed so confident, and was so pleasant, eager, so jovial, and he quickly gave in, and turned back with him towards the Hall.

They had reached the broad gravelled drive-way in front of the mansion, when they discovered the Lady Emeline herself upon the piazza, sitting with her head bent upon her hand, like one disconsolate.

"Hold on," said the old man; "do you let me go on in advance, and speak a word with the lady before you come up." And without further remark he hastened on.

Ayling saw him ascend to the piazza; saw Emeline start quickly to her feet with an exclamation of surprise; saw him take her hand and raise it to his lips; and then he spoke.

Presently the beautiful face was transfigured, and the dear girl clapped her hands with a cry of joy. The eager lover could tarry no longer.

He hastened forward, and as he joined them, and once more took his darling's hand, the good old man bade them follow him, and, as he thus commanded, he turned and strode on in the direction of the old Admiral's sanctum, the two lovers, hand in hand, following close behind.

Having arrived at the sanctum—or the "Growlery," as it was more commonly called—they found Sir Thomas there, alone, with a pipe in his mouth, and a decanter and glass at his elbow.

He saw the intruder, and was upon his feet in an instant, his pipe dropped and broken, and his red face the picture of astonishment.

"What! Sire! If my old eyes do not deceive me, this is a proud and happy moment!"

"Hold on Tom. I am not to be welcomed unless you can also welcome one of the best and the dearest friends I have in the world. And here he is—Lieutenant Ayling. I propose to make him a post-captain as soon as possible. Say, old shipmate, shall we be welcome together?"

Ayling, as might be supposed, when he thus discovered that it was his King whom he had rescued from mortal peril, was deeply and powerfully affected, but his senses did not leave him.

He saw the pitiable situation of Sir Thomas, and, in the goodness of his heart, he moved quickly forward to his relief.

"Sir Thomas," he said, extending his hand, "let us forget the past."

"But don't forget me!" cried the King, jokingly.

"No danger of that," responded Ayling, heartily, and with a deep, true feeling.

"When a British seaman forgets England's gallant sailor-King, we may look for chaos come again!"

"Well said! You are right, my true-hearted boy!" exclaimed the old Admiral, plainly by way of setting himself right with his sovereign; and he grasped the youth's outstretched hand, as he added, "That sentiment does you credit, my boy: and since his Majesty—God bless and keep him!—avouches for you, I should be a traitor and renegade, indeed, if I could refuse thus and extend the hand of friendship. Welcome! Welcome to the pair of you!"

And then, having taken breath, he demanded, "Sire, pray tell me, how in the world did you get here? How came you, and whence?"

"My dear old Tom, I ran away from the turmoil of the Court on purpose to get a day of blessed rest and recreation with you. I came in my own coach, and left it at the rear gate of your park, directing my groom to find the stables as best he could, while I took a comfortable walk beneath your majestic old oaks. But it came near to being a dear walk to me; and if it had not been for our brave and gallant boy here—son of one of the very best friends Heaven ever gave me—you might never have seen William the Fourth of England alive again.

But I'll tell you about it over a pipe and a glass."

Shortly after this, the two young people were sent away to look after the work of the gardener, the King hailing our hero as he was turning away.

"By the way, Lieutenant —— I don't like that title. We must make it *Captain*. You have lost the stage-coach for to-day, so you may tarry over night, if Sir Thomas can find a bed for you, and ride back with me."

And then the two old shipmates were left to themselves to revel in the scenes, and to fight over again the battles of the times agone.

We will only add, before the young lieutenant left the Hall, he was permitted to hold the Lady Emeline by the hand under the favor of a blessed fortune, for the old Admiral had smiled upon their love, and given his consent to their union.

In a Nut-Shell.

BY CHARLES READ.

"MY DEAR sir, the case lies in a nut-shell. You have only just to go down to the Copse, marry Miss Annie Croker, and live at ease ever after."

"I'll never marry Miss Croker, or any one else, merely at the bidding of a selfish, inconsiderate, unreasonable old man, who had his own way all his life, and fancies he's going to have it after he's dead," Jeff Morrison cried, impatiently, as he walked up and down the room with long strides.

"Why, Judson, it's monstrous—an outrage on a man of sense and honor."

"No fellow can reasonably expect to become the happy possessor of fifteen hundred a year without some one feeling outraged," Harry Judson replied, laying down a letter he had been carefully reading.

"Candidly, Jeff, if I were in your place I'd try to fulfil the conditions of your uncle's will."

"If she were the loveliest creature on the face of the earth, it would be all the same to me. What I resent is being expected to marry merely for the sake of the money."

"Nine-tenths of the world do it, whether the fact is expressed or understood."

"Besides," Jeff continued, "as it happens Miss Croker is forty, if a day."

"You'll be forty yourself if you live long enough; then she'll be only fifty-six. That's not such a startling disparity. Besides, Jeff, the Copse and fifteen hundred a year! Over the brink of it, prune, and think of it, and grant me grace, how much you could do for—for all of them!"

Jeff threw himself into a chair with an exclamation that need not be recorded.

"Am I never to hear the end of what I might, could, would, and should do for all of them.

"Haven't I done enough—given up all my prospects, hopes, personal tastes, and ambitions that I might become an immediate help to them?

"Do you think it was from choice I threw up law and became a clerk in Friday Street? Do you suppose I prefer living in genteel lodgings in Islington to chambers in the Temple? Harry Judson, you're a brute!"

"Possibly, Jeff; and with the instinct that characterises the brute creation, I see a great deal more than you imagine. In the first place, I see what you most selfishly shut your eyes to, namely, that instead of being a help and comfort to your mother and sisters, you are a worry and expense. You asked for my advice, and I gave it to you honestly; go and see how far you can fulfil your uncle's wishes consistently with honor and self-respect.

"The opinion I've thrown in gratis. You may take it for what it's worth; but I repeat, for your mother's sake, that it is your duty to go to the Copse!"

Jeff listened in somewhat sulky silence. Harry Judson was a lawyer, very clever and promising, people said; but still making but a meagre living out of his profession.

Before his father's death, Jeff had also been studing for the same calling, and it was a keen blow to him to have to throw up his most cherished ambitions, and take a clerkship in the city, scarcely realising how very fortunate he was to secure it.

His father had held a good position connected with the Court of Chancery; but he lived up to his large salary, and at his sudden death nothing remained but his life insurance settled on his wife.

Jeff had no alternate but to work, the only pity was he did not do it with a better grace.

He had never had any expectations from his uncle at all. Mr. Croker had never spoken to his half-sister since she married Mr. Morrison, and he had numerous relatives of his own name; therefore the contents of the will astonished him greatly.

Old John Croker had never married, and for a number of years his cousin, Miss Anne, a somewhat elderly and wholly ungracious spinster, kept his house.

So much was known to the Morrisons, and they generally agreed that he would leave her all his property. But when the terms of the will became known, there was amazement on the part of the girls and their mother, and boundless wrath on Jeff's.

The whole income was to be his, provided he married Miss Anne Croker within a year, or if he proposed and she refused him; and to be hers in the event of his failing to fulfil the conditions stipulated.

Jeff took the letter at once to Harry Judson. He was very clever, moreover he was engaged to Amy, the younger of the two girls; and was altogether a great friend of the family.

But like the majority of people who ask for advice, he resolved not to follow it, if it did not coincide exactly with his own ideas; and nothing, he declared, could induce him to marry just to gratify the whim of a selfish relative he had never seen.

He expected that Harry would entirely sympathise with him, call him noble, self-sacrificing, an example for all young men to follow.

He thought there was something above the counting-house in it. Catch Mr. Sidney, "the governor's son," refusing a chance of that sort.

Then he would be more than ever a hero, and a martyr in his mother's eyes; and Harry Judson, whom he envied, admired, and tried to imitate, thought him a fool!

It was a mortifying blow, and as Jeff walked home to Islington, his ideas took a terribly downward flight. He resolved to be revenged.

He would make his future brother-in-law smart for the unpleasant things he said, though in his heart Jeff felt painfully conscious that they were true.

"If I marry Miss Croker, I'll be in a position to make them all look up to me. As he said, it all lies in a nut-shell. With fifteen hundred a year I'll never consent to my sister's marriage with a beggarly lawyer," he said, with boyish malice, "and I'll go down to Fenwold to-morrow."

When Harry called the next evening to see Amy, he was agreeably surprised to hear that Jeff had gone to the Copse, after all.

"It must be the sound rating I gave him," he said, complacently. "You all spoil the boy so, I'm compelled to be a little rough to him sometimes."

Had he known the dark and dreadful designs that filled Jeff's head as he was driven along the dreary road from the little country town of Fenwold, he would have been counterably amused.

It was dusk when he reached the Copse, and his loud knock at the door brought a very feeble old man-servant, followed by a still feebler old woman into the hall.

After much struggling with bolts and bars, he was admitted, and asked for Miss Croker.

A tall, thin, nervous-looking lady, clad in deep black, appeared on the scene, and introduced herself, regarding the intruder curiously.

"I am Jeffrey Morrison, and I have come in obedience to my uncle's commands," he said, rather stiffly; but the lady seized him by the hand, dragged him into a pleasant room, and scanned his face curiously.

"Dear me, yes, of course. I had almost forgotten," she said, nervously. "How do you do, Mr. Jeffrey Morrison?

"Quite well, thank you.

Not a propitious opening by any means, and both sat awkwardly silent after it.

Presently Miss Croker rang for tea, and while she was busy over the tea-things, Jeff regarded her furtively.

A sad, worn face, that might have been handsome once, and was still gentle and refined; a high-pitched tremulous voice; a strange, restless manner.

Altogether the sort of woman one could imagine having lived through some great sorrow, without ever being able to forget it; and instead of being oppressive and disagreeable, she was positively nervous, yet her smile was gentle and sweet.

"Not a bit like what I imagined," Jeff said to himself; "I'm glad I came."

Presently the door opened, and a young girl entered the room hastily, then started and turned crimson on seeing a visitor, glancing round as if she meditated flight.

"Come in, dear," Miss Croker said, gently. "This is Mr. Jeffrey Morrison—my cousin, Mr. Jeffrey. Pussy, dear, will you please shut the door?" for the girl continued standing with the knob in her hand and flushing furiously.

"Allow me, Miss Pussy," Jeff said, advancing to the rescue.

He had not heard her other name, and therefore could not possibly use it; but the young lady looked as if she resented the liberty amazingly.

However, she took her place at the tea-table, and Jeff suddenly found his tongue, and plunged into conversation.

It was easy enough to talk to a pretty, brown-haired girl, whose eyes were dancing with fun and mischief, and whose mouth was quivering with suppressed smiles, just as if she were keenly enjoying the "situation."

For it was one; every time Jeff and Miss Croker glanced at each other, they blushed, and their eyes fell suddenly.

No doubt the girl was intensely amused at the idea of a good-looking young fellow of four-and-twenty "proposing" to Miss Anne.

After tea the old lady took up her knitting, and buried herself in the depths of her favorite easy-chair; and on Miss Pussy devolved the duty of entertaining the visitor, and after the first few minutes they got on admirably.

She sang and played, chatted about authors, painters and preachers, as if she had lived her life in Piccadilly.

She rode, hunted, was fond of boating and tennis, and found a tricycle on country roads very convenient; altogether the evening passed so pleasantly that she started when Sims, the old fashioned butler, came in with the old-fashioned supper-tray.

Not a single word had been spoken of the object of Jeff's visit. But Miss Croker smiled quite affectionately on him as she bade him good night.

Jeff's thoughts were in too great a whirl to render sleep possible.

He came to the Copse with the intention of fulfilling the conditions of his uncle's will.

Now he felt it was impossible, for the simple reason that he had fallen hopelessly, helplessly, head-over-ears in love with Miss Pussy.

Had he not seen her it might possibly have been arranged; but now, no a thousand times—not if the fortune were fifteen millions a year.

At last towards morning he dozed for an hour or two, after having come to the conclusion to seek an interview with Miss Croker, tell her the truth, though it would not be such an easy matter, and return to town by the first train.

After breakfast he craved five minutes' private conversation with Miss Croker, and Pussy left the room with a bewitching little smile and nod, as much as to say, "I know what it's all about," and it braced poor Jeff up to the ordeal.

When she found he was giving up so much for her sake, what would she say, what would she think?

That he was a fool, most likely! Well, no matter, he could not help that.

For a few moments he stood silent beside Miss Croker; then said, nervously:

"I hope you will forgive me, Miss Anne, but I want to tell you that I feel it is impossible for me to fulfil the conditions of my uncle's will. I hoped when I came that I might be able to do so—but circumstances have arisen!"

"Oh! dear me, I am so sorry; and I thought you were getting on so nicely," Miss Croker cried, holding up her hands.

"May I ask what has caused you to alter your mind, Mr. Jeff?"

"I feel the explanation is due to you, but it is none the less hard to give. I feel, Miss Croker, that I have nothing to offer you. When I arrived here last night, my heart at least was my own. Now it has gone from my keeping, and I could not do either of us the gross injustice to propose marriage with my affection unalterably fixed on some one else. Had I not seen Miss Pussy——"

"Bless the child," Miss Croker interrupted, beginning dimly to understand.

"Did you think your uncle wanted you to marry me?"

"The letter I received from his legal advisers certainly gave me that impression," Jeff replied, in confusion.

"Why, you great stupid boy," she said, with a smile; "the will means Pussy—that's only a pet name. She's Miss Anne Croker, too, and was your uncle's favorite cousin. I was so glad when I saw you become such friends at once, for she's such a wilful, spoiled darling. It was your perfect ease, I think, that pleased her."

For a moment Jeff could hardly understand.

When he did, he just kissed Miss Anne heartily, which was perhaps the best thing he could have done.

Pussy, convulsed with laughter outside, heard him, and burst into the room unceremoniously.

"I saw the blunder in a moment, and it was such hard work to keep from laughing last night," she cried, turning to Jeff. "No you must forgive me now." His answer need not be recorded, but Miss Pussy did not seem to resent it.

A week after Harry Judson received a brief note from the young gentleman who so scornfully resented his advice. "You were right, old fellow," it ran. "The case lies in a nut-shell after all, for I'm going to marry Miss Anne Croker."

WONDERS OF LITTLENESS.—Pliny and Elian relate that Myrmecides wrought out of ivory a chariot, with four wheels and four horses, and a ship with all her tackling, both in so small a compass, that a bee could hide either with its wings. Nor should we doubt this, when we find it recorded in English history, on less questionable authority, that in the twentieth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign a blacksmith of London, of the name of Mark Scaliot, made a lock of iron, steel, and brass, of eleven pieces, and a pipe key, all of which only weighed one grain.

Scaliot also make a chain of gold, of forty-three links, which he fastened to the lock and key, and put it round the neck of a flea, which drew the whole with perfect ease. The chain, key, lock, and flea, altogether weighed but one grain and a-half!

Hadrianus saw at Mechlin in Brabant, a cherrystone cut into the form of a basket; in it were fourteen pair of dice distinct, the spots and numbers of which were easily to be discerned with a good eye.

But still more extraordinary than the basket of dice, or any thing we have yet mentioned, must have been a set of turnery shown at Rome, in the time of Pope Paul the Fifth, by one Shad of Mitelbrach, who had purchased it from the artist Oswaldus Norbiugorus.

It consisted of sixteen hundred dishes, which were all perfect and complete in every part, yet so small and slender that the whole could be easily enclosed in a case fabricated in a peppercorn of the ordinary size.

The Pope is said to have himself counted them, but with the help of a pair of spectacles, for they were so very small as to be almost invisible to the naked eye.

Although his holiness thus satisfied his own eyes of the fact, he did not, we are assured, require of those about him to subscribe to it on the credit of his infallibility; for he gave every one an opportunity of examining and judging for himself, and among the persons thus highly favored, particular reference is made to Gaspar Schioppius, Johannes Faber, a physician of Rome.

Turrianus, of whose skill so many wonderful things are related, is said to have fabricated iron mills, which moved of themselves, so minute in size, that a monk could carry one in his sleeve; and yet it was powerful enough to grind in a single day, grain enough for the consumption of eight men.

THE way to get to sleep is not by repeating verses or counting, but by not thinking at all. For instance, as the mind takes up a train of thought, it should be instantly recalled. It will, of course, directly settle upon something else; again recall it. In fact, do not meditate at all. There is nothing tiresome about this process: on the contrary, it is rather amusing, and a person who first tries it will be surprised to find how soon he will begin to lose himself. As the mind puts out feelers it is to be continually patted down, and in an incredibly short time it will withdraw itself and like a tired child go to sleep.

DR. EDSON, who raided the poisonous color-using candy manufacturers of New York, is being urged to turn his attention to "flavoring essences," many of which are alleged to be poisonous, being made from petroleum and other spurious sources.

HON. WM. D. KELLEY.

A reporter of one of our Philadelphia dailies spent a morning with Judge Kelley at his home in that city. The Judge gave the history of his illness and recovery, substantially as follows:

"I had, as a hereditary victim to catarrh, suffered for years. I was subject to violent paroxysms of coughing. Straining for relief had produced abrasion of the membranes and daily effusion of blood from my throat. For four years I passed a portion of each Congressional vacation in the Rocky Mountains or on the Pacific Coast. But my breathing power continued to diminish, until in the early summer of 1873 it was a little more than a panting for breath. About two years before this, my attention had been called to Compound Oxygen. A friend who had great faith in its efficacy advised me to try it. On reading Dr. Starkey's advertisement, I threw the little book aside, and declined to resort to the Treatment, on the ground that it proposed to cure everything, and was consequently without adaptation to any particular disease. I grew worse, and in the summer my breathing was so short that a cough, a sneeze, or a sigh, produced such acute pain at the base of the left lung, that I felt it necessary to close up my affairs, as I did not believe I could last for sixty days. Nor do I now believe I would have lasted for that time, had I not found a potent curative agent.

"I had lost none of my prejudices against Compound Oxygen, but in very desperation, seeing that it could not make me any worse than I was, and as medical treatment had utterly failed to meet my case, I concluded to try it. After a thorough examination, Dr. Starkey, to whom I was then a stranger, said, 'Sir, I have no medicine for either form of your disease (alluding to the catarrh and the bleeding at the throat), but if you will give me time, I can cure you.' My response was a natural one. 'You are frank in saying you have no medicine for either form of my disease, and yet you propose to cure me. By what agency will you work this miracle?' 'The Oxygen Gas,' said he, 'is not a medicine. It has none of the characteristics of medicine compounded of drugs. These create a requirement for continual increase of quantity to be taken; and, if long persisted in, produce some form of disease. But Compound Oxygen produces no appetite for itself. It passes, by inhalation, into the blood, and purifies and invigorates it. The system is thus enabled to throw off effete matter. You will find by experience, if you try the Treatment, that it will not increase the rapidity of your pulse, though the beating will be stronger under its influence.'

"This explanation removed my objections and I could see how such an agent could operate beneficially in cases of a widely different character.

"Dr. Starkey said that the cells of my left lung were congested with catarrhal mucus, and that he believed the gas would at once address itself to the removal of the deposits and the restoration of my full breathing power.

"I began using the Treatment, and at the end of three weeks, was able to report an improved appetite, and the ability to sleep several consecutive hours, with a measurable relief of the pain in the lung.

"Notwithstanding the intense heat, I remained in Philadelphia during the summer.

Before Congress assembled in December, my lung had been relieved of much of its nauseous deposit, and I was able to breathe without pain.

"I am now more than ten years older than I was when I first tested Compound Oxygen. I have had no perceptible effusion of blood for more than six years. I breathe as deeply as I did at any period of my young manhood, and my natural carriage is so erect as to elicit frequent comment.

"You ask if I still continue the Treatment. Whenever I feel a fresh cold, or suffer from the nervous exhaustion which follows excessive labor, I resort to Compound Oxygen. I have the highest confidence not only in the Treatment itself, but in Drs. Starkey & Palen as gentlemen of skill and integrity."

A "Treatise on Compound Oxygen," containing a history of the discovery and mode of action of this remarkable curative agent, and a large record of surprising cures in Consumption, Catarrh, Neuralgia, Bronchitis, Asthma, etc., and a wide range of diseases will be sent free. Address DRS. STARKEY & PALEN, 1109 and 1111 Girard St., Philadelphia.

Our Young Folks.

THE WATERFALL.

BY PIPKIN.

NOW, Mab, here's father's tea piping hot; take it and run along. You know the way: go along by the river, and round by Jerry Smith's cottage; then turn to the right, and the sound of father's axe will guide you."

So spoke Mrs. Lester, while Mab, her little daughter, donned her hat and cloak, with all a child's eagerness at the prospect of a long sunny walk through the woods.

"Mind old Jerry's ghost doesn't catch hold of you," cried her waggish brother Jack, as she crossed the threshold, tea-can in hand.

"There are no ghosts. Mother says they don't live in our days," quoth Mab, disdainfully.

"Wolves do," said Ben, who was just nine, a year older than Mab. "Take care you're not another Red Riding Hood."

"I shan't take care, because Red Riding Hood isn't true any more than fables are true: so father says; and we know fables are not true,' dissented matter-of-fact Mab, out of her eight years' experience.

"Oh, more things are true than you and father know of," observed Jack, with a wink at Ben.

But the little maiden was now out of hearing; once, twice, she waved her hand to them as they watched her from the doorway—how and when would they meet again.

Then she went trip-tripping along by the brook. The brook ran into the wood; here it joined another stream, wildly turbulent, although narrow, then together rushed on like two prankish schoolboys out for a frolic; not long after joining hands, as it were, they leaped down an embankment, laughing, as one could fancy, listening to the babble the waters made, watching the sparkling of the flying spray.

Ah! many a rainbow shimmered about the waterfall; right dangerous was the whirlpool above and below the fall.

Deep down in the ravine the waters meandered, calmly tranquil: very like mature, thoughtful manhood, after the prankish follies of youth are past.

Well, along by the side of the brook trudged Mab, saying aloud, as if to re-assure herself,

"There are no ghosts and no wolves," for only her parents' words could render the imaginative child brave, strong, handsome girl of eight though she was. But ah! ah! what was that?

She was nearing Smith's cottage now, and surely something was stirring among the bushes and undergrowth.

Ah! yes, and a formidable something was to be seen; her eyes scarce took it in ere it had quite vanished.

She met a little old woman a minute after, carrying a bundle of sticks.

"Please, ma'am, did you see anything like a dog or a wolf as you came along?" she asked, half ashamed of her question.

"La! child, no; and I hope shan't, for I likes no such creatures;" so saying: the old woman took to her heels and ran, sticks and all.

Poor little Mab wished she had not scared the old soul with her fancies, for of course they were fancies, when oh, horror! the child's heart seemed to leap into her throat; there, almost close to her, was a hideous creature, which her startled imagination conjured up into something terrible to behold, snorting, growling, and bearing down upon her.

Poor, impulsive, silly Mab! before she well knew what she was doing she had sprung aside, anywhere to be out of the way of the beast—a wolf she thought it was—and that anywhere was into the brook, the prankish brook, just where it joined hands with its wild companion.

The very trees seemed to rustle with consternation as her shriek, but who would hear her?

Not her father, chopping at and felling the giant trees some distance away.

Now two lads rush up to the edge of the brook; they are Jack and Ben.

Jack drops a something very like a skin, and leaps in after poor, screaming, struggling Mab, borne away, borne on to be hugged and embraced in the arms of both streams, and hurried forward to the waterfall.

Alas! alas! will Jack save her?

He has reached her; she is clinging to him; but those two frolicsome watery fellows are tossing them hither and thither as in rude sport.

Ben takes all in with his quick boyish eyes, and runs away, as a very wise boy was he, to warn Jerry Smith of the danger in the mischief-making glee with the dreaming of what is happening not a mile away.

How sweetly pitiful is the calm wondering sky, watching overhead, as one may fancy, the struggle for dear life going on in those wild gurgling waters.

Ah! the two streams do not yield their embrace; they will not let them go.

Mab has a senseless weight in Jack's arms as they are borne on towards the whirlpool; once there, their fate will be sealed.

Jack's senses are leaving him; if Mab was not clinging to him as with the grasp of death, he would let her go; his strong young arms are waxing weak; and oh! a black terrible monster is upon him. Is it a wolf?

The river clamors and laughs—ha-ha! Jack, Mab and the terrible monster are mingling together; then Jack's senses are quite gone, and he remembers no more.

Meanwhile, Ben sweeps on like the wind, hearkening ever in his haste for the welcome "thwack, thwack" of his father's axe.

It is a sweetly tranquil scene he bursts upon at last—a lot of toiling men lopping off the limbs of a huge tree but newly laid low—the lad heard the crash of its fall as he ran.

The warm afternoon glow was about them, the little birds hopping and peering among the wide-spreading branches of the trees around, half startled, half curious, as if to see all.

A terrible shock to John Lester was the tale the panting boy had to tell, and then he too ran like the wind, his companions in full cry behind.

Down by the exultant river, all flecked with [illegible] with afternoon coloring, met the [illegible] eager men when they reached [illegible]; the struggle was over.

Two lives had gone out or had been saved; the father wrung his hands as he rushed madly here and there, and peered over at the plashing waterfall, Ben at his side, and neither seeing anything of the dear ones they sought.

"And it all came of Jack's putting on old Shag's skin and playing wolf to frighten Mab; and she saw him, and jumped in before he had time to speak," wailed Ben, as the river swept on and the waterfall clamored.

John Lester groaned.

"Well, Master Lester, I have 'em safe enough—I and old Jowler. 'Twas a miracle of savin', but 'tis done; they're both in bed and asleep like two tops already."

So spoke Jerry Smith, the owner of the cottage in the woods, and of a ghost to boot, if the lads of the neighborhood could be believed, coming up behind the distracted father, and speaking over his shoulder.

"Then Heaven be praised!" returned he out of the depth of his heart, turning and grasping the old man's hand.

"Ay! I have 'em all safe—ha-ha!" laughed the old man, glancing up at his chamber window, which looked westward, where stood a wooden figure of a miniature North American Indian all in his war paint, and brandishing his knives like a very brave, as the wind caught him and whirled him round.

"And see, Master Lester, I've mounted my savage to amuse them when they wake—my ghost the youngsters about here call it, and keep clear of my house. Ghost, indeed! there are no ghosts."

"No; the world is getting too wise to believe such nonsense in our days, Jerry. But I'd like to take a look at my youngsters," quoth John Lester.

The old man led him in—Ben following on tiptoe—and up to his quaint chamber—ah! yes, it was very quaint and pretty, full of wonderful surprises, what with curious stones arranged here, a stuffed squirrel there, and a dormouse elsewhere.

Then in one corner was a fleet of ships—ah! Jerry had been a sailor in his youthful days—which sailed round a centre one and stationery, by using an apparatus not unlike small bellows.

And there in the west window stood the warrior Indian, chopping and cutting at imaginary foes among the sunbeams.

But the father's eyes sought his children. Ah, yes, he was thankful to see there they were, both sweetly sleeping, Mab in the old man's bed, a stray sunbeam flitting over her face, like a smile from somewhere, Jack lying at full length on the floor wrapped in blankets.

The sweet after-glow was about the house ere they awoke, and then peals of laughter from both children brought old Jerry up his creaking stairs.

Nay, Jack was out on the landing, carrying out of his blankets and [illegible] clothes which Ben had brought home from home.

When the two old friends had closed and closed behind the [illegible] stood [illegible] for [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

THE OLD YEAR.

BY LONGFELLOW.

Full knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing:
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly, and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year you must not die,
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year you shall not die.

He lieth still: he doth not move;
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above—
He gave me a friend, and a true, true love,
And the New Year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go,
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He frothed his bumpers to the brim;
A jollier year we shall not see.
But tho' his eyes are waxing dim,
And tho' his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year, you shall not die;
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die, across the waste,
His son and heir doth ride post haste,
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own;
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the new year blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! Over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps: the light burns low:
'Tis nearly one o'clock.
Shake hands before you die;
Old year we'll dearly rue for you,
What is it we can do for you?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin—
Alack! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:
Step from the corpse and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door.

IN LOWER LIFE.

RATS are very unselfish animals: no sooner do they find out where a feast is stored, than they kindly communicate the good news to their friends and neighbors.

Some years ago a certain old lady, having a cask of wine of her own making, had it carefully placed on a shelf in the cellar. Two nights afterwards she was almost frightened to death by strange, unaccountable noises in the said cellar. The household were called up and a search was made, but nothing was found to clear up the mystery.

The next night, as soon as the lights were extinguished and the house quiet, this dreadful noise was again heard. This time it was still more alarming—a sound of crying, squeaking, knocking, pattering of feet; then a dull, scratching sound, with many other such noises, which continued all night long.

She lay awake, resolving, if necessary, to fire off the rusty old blunderbuss that hung over the chimney-piece. At last the cocks began to crow. Now, thought she, the ghosts must disappear, and to her infinite relief the noise really ceased, and the terrified old lady fell asleep.

Great were the preparations made for the following night: farm-servants, armed with pitchforks, slept in the house; the maids took the dinner-bell into the room and provided themselves with matches; the big dog was tied in the hallway.

Then the old lady retired to her chamber, not to sleep, but to sit in the arm chair by the fire, keeping a drowsy guard over her neighbor's horse-pistols, of which she was almost as much afraid as she was of the ghost in the cellar.

Sure enough, her warlike preparations had succeeded. The ghost was certainly laid; not a sound disturbed the heavy snoring of the farm-servants, and the rattling of the dog's chain could be heard. She had gained a complete victory: the ghost was no more.

A few weeks afterwards some friends paid her a visit: the wine was mentioned, and the maid sent to the cellar to get some of it. She quickly returned, gasping for breath. She rushed into the room, exclaiming:

"It's all gone, ma'am! The ghost has taken it!"

And gone it was. Not a drop was left—only the empty cask remained; the side was half eaten away, and marks of sharp teeth were visible round the ragged margins of the newly-made bung-hole.

This discovery fully accounted for the noise the ghost had made, which caused so much alarm.

The rats inhabiting the cellar had found out the wine and communicated the good news to all the other rats in the neighborhood, and they had quickly assembled there to enjoy the fun and get tipsy, which, judging from the noise they made, they certainly did, on this precious cask of wine. Being quite a large party, they had finished it in two nights, and then, having got all they could, they quietly returned to their respective homes, little dreaming that the merrymaking had nearly caused the death of the rightful owner and foundress of the feast.

They had first gnawed out the cork and got as much as they could, but finding that the more they drank the lower the wine become, they set to work and ate away the wood to the level of the wine again.

This they continued till they had emptied the cask, and then they must have got into it and licked up the last drains. The remains of the cask are still kept by the old lady as a curiosity.

Rats frequently show their great kindness towards their companions who may have sustained any injury. A man, lately passing a mill, his attention was attracted to a huge rat coming out of his hole by the river bank.

After carefully surveying the place, the rat retreated with much caution. But very soon it returned, leading by the ear another, which it left close by the hole. A third rat joined the kind conductor, and they searched about and picked up some scraps of grain; these they carried to the second rat, who appeared to be blind, and which remained quietly where they had left it, nibbling such fare as was brought to it.

They seemed to relax their exertions, and were still for a short time. After this rest one of the rats seized a small stick, about five inches in length, which he inserted in the blind rat's mouth, and, taking hold of the other end, he conducted his blind companion to the water's edge, and after both had had a drink, the blind rat was led back to his hole. Many instances of this kind are recorded.

Grains of Gold.

Without earnestness no man is ever great or really does great things.

Knowledge, economy and virtue are the shining virtues of civilized man.

Old age has deformities enough of its own; do not add to it the deformity of vice.

If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows that he is a citizen of the world.

A man's good fortue often turns his head; his bad fortune as often averts the head of his friends.

Do not use evasions when called upon to do a good thing, nor excuses when you are reproached for doing a bad one.

To assist our fellow-creatures is the noblest privilege of mortality; it is, in some sort, forestalling the bounty of Providence.

Resolve to edge in a little reading every day, if it is but a single sentence; if you gain fifteen minutes a day, it will make itself felt at the end of a year.

Strength must be found in thought, or it will never be found in words. Big-sounding words, without thoughts corresponding, are efforts without effect.

"Beware," said Lavater, of him who hates the laugh of a child." "I love God and little children," was the simple but sublime sentiment of Richter.

The water that has no taste is purest; the air that has no odor is freshest; and of all the modifications of manner, the most generally pleasing is simplicity.

The happiness of your life depends upon the character of your thoughts: therefore, watch well over them, and entertain none that are contrary to purity and truth.

Preserve your conscience always soft and sensitive. If but one sin forces its way into that tender part of the soul, and dwelleth there, the road is paved for a thousand iniquities.

To indulge in ridicule, whether the subject be present or absent, is to descend below the level of gentlemanly propriety. Your skill may excite laughter, but will not ensure respect.

Retribution is one of the grand principles in the Divine administration of human affairs. There is everywhere the working of the everlasting law of requital. Man always gets as he gives.

The coldest-mannered people are frequently those who look for most warmth from others; and, when their expectations are not gratified, they forget that the coolness they meet with is but a dim reflection of their own.

Femininities.

"I thought myself matchless, and now I find myself so."

It is said that Japanese women have never seen, and do not know, the use of pins.

Lincoln county, Tennessee, boasts of a woman—Betty Franham—who is reputed to be 116 years old.

A certain lady writer says that woman is a silent power in the land. That will be news to thousands of husbands.

Stockings did not become fashionable until Queen Elizabeth's time. This is why Christmas was not so pleasant a feast before then.

The young woman who sneeringly remarks that men are all alike, generally shows her sincerity by taking the first man who offers himself to her.

The man who blows his brains out because a lady has refused to marry him, confirms the good judgment of the aforesaid lady in the most positive way.

A little girl, seeing the willow phaetons for the first time, exclaimed: "Why mamma, nearly everybody rides out in their clothes-baskets here, don't they?"

Mamma: "Yes, my child, we shall all know each other in heaven." Edith: "But, mamma, we can make believe we're out when some of them call, can't we?"

The reason why a widow is always so popular, is that a man has had a chance to see what kind of a wife she has made, and a modest widow is the dowdiest thing in creation.

When it was publicly announced that two society ladies would have a "piano contest" at Cape May, one hundred and fifty-seven trunks were incontinently packed, and the season closed the following day.

A Cleveland lady afforded the public considerable amusement the other day by promenading the streets for two or three hours with a card on her cloak reading: "Former price, $30; marked down to $12 to close out."

"Describe her, if you please," said the lawyer. "Well, she is dark-complexioned, and wears a thingummy kind of dress, cut bias—and as to her age, why she is two or three years younger than you'd take her to be."

"Papa, is it nice to make remarks about people's dress?" "Why, certainly not, my darling; what did you ask that for?" "Nothing, papa, only mamma said my dress was awfully shabby, and wondered why papa hadn't noticed it long ago."

A sensitive Ohio girl is ill from nervous prostration. She worked in a millinery shop, where great numbers of little birds were used in trimming bonnets, and she grieved constantly over the victims of fashion until her health finally gave way to the strain.

It is the opinion of a country physician, whose name is not given, that the increased debility among young women and girls may be laid to roller skating. Does the man of physic want to give the rinks a boom?

A Camden young man is quite "gone" on "Hamlet." Reading it to the girl of his heart last week, he came to the passage: "Or if thou will needs marry, marry a fool." "Is that a proposal, dear?" she asked. "Yes, darling," he replied. And they settled it there and then.

Man is strong, but his heart is not adamant. He needs a tranquil mind, and especially if he is an intelligent man, with a whole head, he needs its moral force in the conflict of life. To recover his composure, home must be a place of peace and comfort.

The favorite writing-paper of the Princess of Wales is a blue bank paper, with a fac-simile of her signature of Christian name in gold or bronze across the upper left-hand corner, and the day of the week in the same style on the top line at the right.

When packages are sent home, fold up all good wrapping paper, running a warm iron over any which is badly crumpled; lay each kind in a pile by itself, either in box or cupboard, and many steps will be saved when a piece is wanted for wrapping a package.

A lady's best reason for being an old maid:

"Because methinks 'tis better far
To live and die alone
(Since he I love cares not for me)
Than marry one I could not love,
And live in misery."

A story is told in connection with the execution of a murderer at San Jose, Cal., a week or so ago, and is to the effect that the trap was dropped by severing a hair, from the head of the murderer's victim. The trap was so nicely balanced by a system of counter-weights that the strength of a hair was sufficient to keep it in place.

Cards are out announcing the engagement of Master Willie Scott, aged four years, of Hardensville, Va., and Miss Jennie Perry, aged six years, of Charleston, W. Va. It will be interesting to note in future years how much weight this parental contract will have with the youngsters. Cupid is an erratic fellow, and makes sad havoc with the plans of men.

Caligula, the Roman Emperor, was one of the greatest monsters the world has known. But his wife, whom he frequently menaced with torture to compel her to confess how she had retained his love, was passionately devoted to him. After hearing of his assassination, she hurried, wild with grief, to the spot, and refused to leave his body. She begged his murderers in pity to kill her, and when they stabbed her, she thanked them with her latest breath.

The best cement for mending broken dishes is white lead. It is better than all the advertised cements. With a bit of stick spread the paint, which must have plenty of oil in it, smoothly on each piece, press them tightly together, and, if it be necessary, tie them in place, wiping away all paint which comes out. They must stand for months, or a year, perhaps, to harden, but at the end of that time they are as strong as if they had never been broken.

News Notes.

An Ohio boy only nine years old writes poetry.

The eyes of a bee contain one thousand mirrors.

Dressed pork is four cents a pound in Southern Illinois.

French evening newspapers are dated the following morning.

The coal fields of Arkansas have an area of 12,000 square miles.

At a sale of fans in Madrid, recently, some brought as high as $60.

Several Western railroads have stopped the sale of mileage tickets.

Girls in Eastern Kentucky are frequently married at the age of 12 years.

Only 700,000 of the 2,738,228 residents of Paris were born in that city.

A healthy "weakness" for outdoor pedestrianism has broken out in Paris.

The substitution of glass flooring for boards continues to increase in Paris.

Two Vermont lawyers have tried a case by telephone before a justice of the peace.

From a single grape-vine in Levy county, Fla., 1000 pounds of grapes were taken this season.

The latest fashionable garment in Paris is a short zouave jacket reaching just below the armpits.

One county in Australia has, last year, paid the bounty on 25,880 dozen of captured sparrows' eggs.

The robbery of street car conductors and drivers has become quite common in Louisville, Ky., of late.

The male members of a stranded opera company spent Christmas in the Brockton, Mass., lock-up.

The average glass of whisky, for which ten or fifteen cents is paid, costs the distiller one-sixth of a cent.

Bethlehem, New Hampshire, has only some 1500 inhabitants, but she is credited with six postoffices.

Rabbit hunters in Nevada sometimes average over 100 rabbits a day, and they sell for about $3 a dozen.

Asbestos cloth is now used in England for fireproof theatrical scenery. It costs three times more than linen.

Tea culture is being essayed now in several parts of Europe, and reports are satisfactory even from Russia.

A dollar, worth six hundred dollars, according to a recently-issued catalogue, is the silver dollar of 1804.

The Evangelical clergymen of Terre Haute, Ind., have adopted a resolution against Sunday funerals.

A fine lioness in the London Zoo has eaten her tail, and begun the same process on one of her five paws.

An orange grown near Tocoi, Florida, measured 15 inches in circumference, and weighed 1 pound 9 ounces.

Jas. Skeels, a farmer's boy, near Albany, Oregon, perished with cold within 300 yards of his home, recently.

A father and son are under sentence of death in a Louisiana prison, and for separate and distinct murders.

South Carolina, it is stated, is the only State in the Union that does not make provision in its laws for divorce.

A woman who poured a gallon of molasses on her husband's head, in York county, this State, is under bonds.

Two new flats in Ninth avenue, N. Y., have been designated "Strawberry" and "Raspberry." They come high.

The Crescent Steel Works, at Pittsburg, can turn out in an emergency an ingot of steel weighing 18,300 pounds in one heat.

Not a mile of railroad, not a bank, not a telegraph office, is erected in Calhoun county, Ill., although it has 8,000 population.

A Gutenberg Bible was sold in London, recently, for $18,500. There are said to be but two copies of the book in this country.

Nearly 4,000,000 Christmas cards were sent and received through the London, Liverpool and Manchester postoffices Christmas week.

It is calculated that about 60,000 New Yorkers live at hotels, and that there are about one hundred thousand strangers in that city every night.

At New London, while repairing a vessel, recently, divers, who worked in the water underneath it, used the electric light with perfect success.

A Dakota judge, at Jamestown, the other day, left the bench and knocked down a lawyer who intimated that one of his statements in a ruling was a lie.

Efforts are being made in London to find out where the fog comes from, hoping, if its source be once discovered, a remedy may be found to counteract it.

A Vermont man thinks he has at last found the location of the Garden of Eden. It is in the Manitou Islands, Mich., which are without saloon, doctor or lawyer.

The smelt fisheries of Belfast, Me., now place their covered tents on the floating rafts, and fish through the floor the same way as when their tents rest on the ice.

For killing a puppy dog, a 2½-year-old child was sentenced in a Vicksburg, Miss., court, a few days ago, to pay a fine of $150 or undergo an imprisonment of 30 days.

A Doctor's Story.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

ONE evening, late in the fall of 18—, I was seated in my rude quarters at the B—— post, in Paraguay, reviewing the events of the past few years of my life as presented in a memorandum-book before me, when a knock at the door caused me to shut up my book and invite the person seeking entrance to come in.

For two years I had been surgeon-general of that portion of the army at Paraguay which was stationed at B——, under the command of General Juan Fernido, in connection with which office I was private physician of the commander himself, who, at the time I speak of, was suffering from a severe attack of fever.

The insurgent army, headed by a lawless desperado calling himself Sandsivo, had taken advantage of the sickness of Fernido, and annoyed our army by frequently shooting the scouts, and making attacks upon the weaker portion of the camp.

The encampment of the rebels was supposed to be about five miles north of us, and divided into smaller parties.

I was rather surprised when, as the door opened, a figure, closely muffled in a long cloak, entered the room.

His whole bearing and dress showed that he had come on some mysterious business; and as I caught a gleam in one of his eyes which indicated uneasy restlessness, I looked sharply at him, vainly attempting to pierce his disguise.

Removing his hat, and exposing to my view a well-featured and apparently honest face, he returned to the door, locked it quickly, and returning to the place I sat, seated himself directly opposite me, placing, as he did so, a small leather bag upon the table.

I looked at him with a mystified air not altogether devoid of suspicion.

"You need not be alarmed," he said, smilingly, as if he read my thoughts. "I simply closed the door and locked it to prevent interruption."

"You have something of importance to communicate to me?" I asked, looking curiously at the little bag.

"No, a small matter. That bag contains a few ounces of gold—your fee, if you will favor me with your advice and assistance for a few hours. I have had the misfortune to let a small globule of lead drop into a friend's body, and wish it removed. Accidents are unavoidable, your know, senor, and a man must resent an insult."

"A duel?" I inquired.

He smiled affirmatively.

"And where does this friend of yours lie, senor?"

"Four miles to the north," he replied.

"So near the rebel camp?"

"You need have no fear on that score, doctor. The wounded man has been removed to a house near by, and you are safe in your professional capacity. Will you accompany me?"

I replied by going into my little surgery in the next room, and returning with my case of surgical instruments.

"A guide and two mules await us outside the camp," he said, as we left the room and passed the sentinels.

We jogged on at a rapid pace, my companion managing to fall behind me, while the guide led the way.

Little or no conversation was carried on, the stranger seeming to have lost his vivacity of manner.

Suddenly, as we turned a sharp rock, beyond which point the broad-spreading *llano* stretched, my eyes were dazzled by an unexpected burst of light.

Not ten feet before me lay the rebel encampment. So sudden was the discovery that I sat on my mule dumfounded.

The stranger placed his hand on my shoulder, and said—

"You understand the affair now, senor?"

"Yes," I returned, stung by the tone in which he spoke, and roused from my stupor by the anger I felt at being thus easily led into the lion's den. "You have brought me here under false pretenses. I regarded you as a man of honor."

"All means are fair in love or war, you know, doctor."

And, with a light laugh, he dismounted and led my mule nearer the camp.

Around the large camp-fire were stretched, perhaps, fifty or seventy-five men, who withdrew to a short distance at a sign from a man who wore the officers' garb of the insurgent band who came forward as I dismounted and extended his hand.

"Welcome, doctor. I hope you will pardon the motive which leads us to cause you the trouble of a journey over yonder rugged hills, but I wished to see you on government business."

And he led the way to the fire, where we seated ourselves.

"Do you not recognise me?" he asked, after he had lighted a cigarette.

"N—no. I think I have seen your face before, but I cannot recall the time and place."

"I am Sandsivo!"

I looked at him curiously for a moment. And this was the man who had murdered a hundred innocent children, and pillaged and sacked every available village on the Rosciero.

Involuntarily my eyes wandered over his face and body.

"You are looking for claws and the forked tail, I suppose, Senor Doctor?" he said, laughing.

"No," I said, boldly, "I have not the superstition of the ignorant. I thought to see the mark of Cain."

He started forward angrily, but the fire in his eye cooled, as he said—

"This is trifling. You have been brought here to-night on a matter which affects materially the future interests of the Argentine Confederation. On my word of honor, you shall leave here to-night safely if you accede to our wishes; if not——"

"'Your word of honor!' I have had a practical illustration of its value in the conduct of my guide hither."

"We will not speak of that, Senor Doctor. You are aware of the fact that we are a brave band of persecuted——"

"Ruffians and assassins," I added, calmly.

"*Diable!* I am almost inclined to end this thing," he exclaimed, maddening instantly as he spoke. "But to proceed; our object is to free ourselves from the servitude imposed upon us by Juan Fernido and his followers. To do this, it is necessary that he should be put out of the way. You understand?"

"Perfectly, my worthy captain; but how does that affect me!"

"I am coming to that presently. We require you to give Juan Fernido, who is under your care at present, a little drug which shall put him beyond the power of seeking us again."

"That is, killing him."

The bandit took his cigarette from his mouth and nodded.

"Secondly, you are to give us the exact position, strength, and weak points of his camp. And lastly, you are requested to take an oath never to divulge what transpired to-night."

"And what do you propose to give me, to do this humane and loyal thing for you?"

I spoke in a sarcastic tone, but he mistook my meaning, and eagerly remarked—

"Fifty ounces of gold and the promise of lieutenant-commander, if we succeed."

"And if I decline your offer?"

"You will be tied hand and foot, bound to a log, and set floating down the Rosciero yonder, which, two miles below, flows through a rocky mountain gorge. Death, terrible, inevitable death is certain."

"I reject your offer."

"What?"

He leaped to the ground as he spoke, with a fierce oath of doubt and anger.

I calmly repeated that I scorned his offer, and was willing to meet my fate.

He placed a whistle to his lips, and a half dozen of his followers came up. They were ordered to take me to the bank of the river, which flowed a few rods below on the *llano* and, after a short course, flowed through the rocks near the edge of the hills.

They obeyed by leading me to the place, where I was securely bound to a log, my right arm alone being free.

"Once more: will you accede to my requests?" demanded the ruffian.

"I have decided," I replied, calmly.

"Then launch him."

I was lifted and placed within the cold waters of the Rosciero. A moment later the swift current was bearing me onward toward the rocky gorge.

For about half an hour, perhaps, I experienced no painful sensation save a cold, dull feeling of numbness and incapacity to move.

I seemed to be dreaming and was being borne through the air gently, for the current, though swift moved smoothly.

At last I was roused from my stupor by a keen, cold feeling of pain near my heart. It was the chill of death, for suddenly my whole frame became racked with shooting pains, which caused my limbs to become almost convulsed, and strain the strong withes with which I was bound.

But what was the sound which now greeted my agitated hearing—that dull, half-subdued falling of water?

A moment later I was borne round a sharp curve in the stream into a still fiercer current, and the full consciousness of my fearful position suddenly broke upon me; I had entered the mountain-gorge, and was fast nearing the falls.

Suddenly a sharp pain shot through my left limb, as if a sword's point had entered it. That member became free and swung with the motion of the log, now to the right, now to the left, stricking against the rocky bottom of the river, and mangling it badly.

Apparently some sharp-pointed rock had severed the rope, and I now felt the blood once more circulate through my veins.

Unbinding the rope with a severe effort by means of my left hand, I had the satisfaction of feeling that I was free, and a wild gleam of hope shot through my soul; but I still retained my hold of the log, which was rapidly nearing the cataract, whose roar I now distinctly heard.

Every moment brought me nearer the falls.

Suddenly the log shot ahead with fearful velocity.

I lost my hold, and fell unconscious on the hard rocks at the side of the stream.

It was broad daylight when I recovered my senses.

Four feet below was the still roaring river, hastening to the falls beneath. I had been landed on a level shelf on the shore of the stream, and found but little difficulty, severe as were my injuries, in scaling the slight elevation, and reaching the more level *llano* beyond.

Four hours afterward, ragged, and so lame that I could hardly walk, I entered the encampment.

General Fernido greeted me warmly, expressing no little astonishment at my pale face and swollen hands.

Astonishment gave way to gratefulness when I related my strange experience, which one year afterward, when I left for New York, the rebellion having been crushed, assumed a substantial evidence of sincerity in the shape of a splendid medal and seventy ounces of gold.

POPPING THE QUESTION.

THAT the modes and conditions relative to courtship and matrimony vary considerably in different parts of the world, the most superficial acquaintance with the characteristics of the human species will prove, and this is in no way so conspicuous as in the matter of "popping the question."

It has often been said, in regard to many of the common things of life, that "they manage these things much better in France;" yet even that republic must be held to be less advanced in the arts and intrigues of courtship than are many of the ruder nations of the earth.

For instance, in the Fiji Islands, in China, in Japan, and among many of the Indian tribes, the children of two families are betrothed in infancy, thus saving them all anxieties and troubles of choosing their partners for themselves.

The same custom exists in nothern latitudes, especially among the Lapps and the Esquimaux, and of which the old-fashioned Welsh practice known as "bundling" must be regarded as an example.

Among the Sowrahs, in India, courtship takes place by proxy, and the would-be husband is spared all the inconveniences of popping the question, in his own person, by despatching a confidant to the lady on his behalf.

This may be very well in some cases; yet it incurs this very glaring danger, that the friend, being possibly an expert at the wooing, might woo the lady for himself!

Among the aborigines of India things are managed even more pleasantly. There the young ladies emulate the privileges of our Leap Year custom by choosing their husbands for themselves.

In Bombay, and along the Malabar coast, husband-seeking is encouraged even in the schools, and all that a young European or a half-caste anxious for matrimony need do is to signify his desires to the mistress of the establishment, who thereupon takes measures to make him, possibly, a happy man for life.

In short, she institutes a tea-party, to which the would-be husband is invited, and where he is at liberty to make his own selection from the assemblage.

The consent of the fair (?) one is of course, asked, which, being obtained, the marriage ceremony may be proceeded with at once, and the late pupil, from her books and her slate, becomes translated to a new state of felicity.

In Kaffirland, the ladies again use their own discretion in the matter of choosing their husbands, though the experience of the latter would prompt one to opine that rather elaborate efforts are necessary for the wooing.

For some time previous to the actual bombardment of her affections, friends and others are induced to speak well of her suitor in presence of the selected one, and, unless she be very resolute, she speedily capitulates, and sends a messenger to the expectant with an invitation to the kraal.

And here his own qualifications are brought to the test, for, having bathed, he adorns himself in his best manner, as far as the extent of his country's attire permits.

Arrived at the kraal, he squats himself down, awaiting the siren's approach. She then carefully scrutinizes his face and figure, taking care to obtain a view of him from all sides.

On the following day he is put through his paces in the cattle field, in presence of the whole village, principally women, who usually play their pre-conceived part by showering the most lavish praises upon him.

Should the lady express herself pleased with his appearance and agility, he is at once declared her affianced husband, and the marriage will be held, with customary rejoicings, at no distant date.

In other directions of semi-civilization, the question of marriage becomes a matter far less of choice than one of purchase.

Indeed, in many instances, the damsel is never consulted at all, and the entire topic rests with the parents.

In the Nile valley, wives are constantly disposed of by the father for so many heads of cattle; hence the saying, "No cows, no wife;" so that the lover who is not possessed of the means of bartering for conjugal affection must remain a bachelor to the end of his days.

Again, among the Rookies, the marriage proposal is always made by the father of the lover to the father of the beloved; though whether this originated from the notion of the greater experience of the elders in such affairs has never been stated.

MARRIAGE OF EMINENT PERSONS.—The following are the ages at which the several eminent persons enumerated were married: Shakespeare, 18; Ben Jonson, 21; Waller, 22; Franklin, 24; Mozart, 25; Dante, Kepler, Fuller, Johnson, Burke, Scott, 26; Byron, Washington, Wellington, Buonaparte, 27; Penn, Sterne, 28; Nelson, Linnæus, 29; Burns, 30; Chaucer, Hogarth, 32; Wordsworth, Davy, 32; Aristotle, 36; Sir William Jones, 37; Wilberforce, 38; Luther, 42; Addison, 44; Wesley, Young, 47; Swift, 49; Buffon, 55.

Catarrh Cured.

A clergyman, after suffering a number of years from that loathsome disease, Catarrh, after trying every known remedy without success, at last found a prescription which completely cured and saved him from death. Any sufferer from this dreadful disease sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Dr. Lawrence, 199 Dean Street, Brooklyn, New York, will receive the receipt free of charge.

WHAT IS MALARIA!

A Plan to Successfully Combat a Disease that Defies Analylis.

The once accepted theory that malaria flourished only in wet, swampy localities, followed the clearing of large tracts of land, is no longer tenable, as the majority of its victims are now numbered among inhabitants of cities and long established settlements.

But laying aside all questions of theory we come face to face with the vital question, what is malaria? and how is it to be successfully vanquished? To the first enquiry we reply, mal aria (bad air) from which the word is derived, explains its character exactly. Bad air taken into the lungs and disseminated through the blood, poisons the entire system, and typhoid fever, malaria fever, diphtheria and other dangerous diseases follow. Equally bad effects result from contaminated water, bad drainage, or continued over-exertions as they all cause loss of nerve life, the essence of physical well being.

Malarial poison cannot be detected by chemical tests, and is only known by its effects upon the system.

One of the worst cases of malaria was that of Mrs. C. F. Boshen, of 67 Fifth St., Troy, N. Y. Her experience, of great value, is given, that others may receive like benefit. She suffered not only from malaria, her complexion being of a saffron hue, but also from enlargement of the liver. Her appetite was ravenous, especially for acids. "One day," says Mrs. Boshen, "my physician asked for a sample of fluid for chemical analysis. I was then passing 7 ounces a day, which he reported as 'very bad,' and that he could do no more for me, as I had all the indications of Bright's disease. I then went to a specialist from Madison Ave., New York, who recommended electricity, saying I had spinal disease. For six months I did not have a natural movement of the bowels. I took in all 125 electrical treatments. I was much bloated, and have weighed as high as 175 pounds. I would have periods of semi-unconsciousness, seeing my friends, but being unable to converse. Racking pains pierced the base of my brain. I became so dizzy I could not walk across the floor without support. I also to a great extent lost my memory. I then began to use a preparation I had frequently heard of, but confess I had but little faith in it."

"At first it made me deathly sick, but after the bile had been eliminated I began to amend and dismissed my physician. When I commenced the new treatment I weighed 160 pounds. In three months I was down to my natural weight, 140 pounds. I have a good appetite, my liver performs its functions, my complexion is good, and no one would think from my appearance that I had ever been ill. My fluids are normal, my bowels greatly improved. My headaches and all dizziness have disappeared." The case of William Wallace Lonsbury, of 228 Lake St., Chicago, Ill., is another remarkable one. He says: "In addition to being dizzy and having a sallow complexion, my digestion was very poor and I suffered almost continually with severe pains in my bowels. Finally, I became too ill to leave my bed and called in an allopath physician of thirty-seven years practice. He prescribed quinine. After being in bed a week without receiving any benefit, and having night sweats which colored my linen yellow, I concluded to take my wife's advice and try warner's safe cure. From the first it helped me, and after taking six bottles, with safe pills, I was cured entirely of all pain, poor digestion and bloody discharges, a healthy color took the place of a sallow one, and I felt like a new creature."

From the above it will be observed that malaria has no certain localities for its own, but lurks wherever bad air and water predominate. The only sure method to counteract its poisonous effects is to check its first developments.

PUBLIC GARDEN.—The annual report of the English Metropolitan Public Garden Playground Association is doubly interesting. It shows what ought to be done for the people as well as what has been done. It seems extraordinary that over seventy-eight open spaces in the very heart of London should until two years ago have remained useless for purposes of health and recreation. The association has taken thirty of these in hand, laid them out in gardens and playgrounds, fitted them with gymnasia and seats, and given them over to the local or metropolitan authorities to keep up and take care of.

The association is still struggling with forty-eight more open spaces, and with every prospect of success, provided the needful funds be forthcoming, for which his lordship makes a well-timed appeal. The cause is a thoroughly sound and healthy one.

All classes are benefitted—the poor, who want room; the rich, who want the air of London kept pure, and so are directed interested in keeping open the lungs of London which are its disused burial grounds, its waste places and its obscure squares, as well as the parks.

A DISTINGUISHED Judge once complimented a red-faced constable for having performed some official duty very acceptably. "Your honor," exclaimed the officer, "I would blush, if I could!"

A Southern newspaper, the other day, spoke of the need of a "pluvial dispensation," and was obliged to tell its readers, in its next issue that it meant it.

New Publications.

From E. P. Noll & Co., Map Publishers and Mounters, 17 North Sixth St., this city, we have received a very nicely mounted calender for the present year.

The Philadelphia *Record* Almanac, for 1885, is profusely illustrated and contains among its special features an illustrated description of *The Record's* beautiful building, lists of public officers, election returns, a table of prices for principal commodities during 1884, sporting statistics and events of the year, all very handy to have. It is given free to its subscribers.

MAGAZINES.

The January *Magazine of American History* is strong and interesting in all its varied features. The frontispiece is a fine portrait of Count De Vergennes, illustrating an exceptionally well-considered paper. The Manor of Gardiner's Island is an illustrated paper by the Editor, sketching the romantic career of the founder of the first English settlement in the State. Puritanism in New York, by Rev. Charles A. Briga, D. D., will attract distinguished attention, as he traces the origin and growth of this religious force until the middle of the XVIIIth century. The Building of the Monitor, by Rev. Francis B. Wheeler, D.D., of Poughkeepsie, is another paper presenting new facts of special historic value. A notable contribution to the number is the illustrated Diary of Dr. John Jeffries, the first aeronaut who crossed the English channel in a balloon. He was an American and the centennial of the event was celebrated in Boston on January 7, 1885. Original Documents contain seven unpublished letters from prominent men of the Revolution. Charles Ledyard Norton furnishes the second chapter of Political Americanisms; and Minor Topics, Notes, Queries, Replies, Societies and the other departments are even more highly entertaining than usual. Price $5.00 a year in advance. Published at 30 Lafayette Place, New York City.

The January number of the *North American Review* is an excellent one. We are now so safely over the crisis of the presidential election that men of all parties can consider calmly Bishop Huntington's essay on Vituperation in Politics. Under the title, The Reunited South, Henry Watterson presents with great clearness the Southern and Democratic view of the political situation as it now stands. That of labor and its compensation Col. Hinton, in American Labor Organization, shows with what equipment it will take the field. But the article that the literary reader will first turn to is Frederic Harrison's brilliant and incisive discussion of Froude's Life of Carlyle; while the religious or philosophical reader will find it Courtney's Socrates, Buddha, and Christ, specific statements and quotations of those parallel doctrines that are so often vaguely alluded to. For the scientific reader, Mr. Proctor discusses learnedly Herschel's Star Surveys, and Prof. Le Conte presents and explains some curious facts in relation to The Evidence of the Senses. Mr. Mulhall's paper on The Increase of Wealth, is a successful endeavor to render large mass of figures popularly intelligible. The North American Review, New York. Price 50 cents per number.

The New Year's number of *Wide Awake* supplements the beautiful Christmas issue in a delightful fashion, filled as it is with holiday stories, pictures, and poems. The frontispiece, by Lungren, represents one of Boston's merriest scenes—evening skating in the Public Garden; the drawing is accompanied by a charming poem by Margaret Sidney. A crisp and merry winter story follows, Snowy Peter, from the pen of Susan Coolidge, a finished piece of literary work, and in its fancy suggestive of Hawthorne. Another story, fine in its literary finish, is from the pen of Edward Abbott, the editor of the *Literary World*; it is entitled Light on the Hill. The first of the promised Group of True Western Stories is given in this number; Wagon-Tire Camp, by Kate Foote, recording the first discovery of gold in the West, and illustrated by Mary Hallock Foote. David Ker also has a bright traveling sketch, A School in the Faroe Islands; and Yon Phou Lee in his curious series, When I was a Boy in China, describes a Chinese house. The serials move on entertainingly; the Tennessee Story, Down the Ravine, by Charles Egbert Craddock, the historical story, In Leisler's Times, by E. S. Brooks, and the Wonder Story, The Bubbling Teapot, by Mrs. Lizzie W. Champney. The poems and their illustrations are notably fine. The Dream Peddler, with its full-page fanciful drawing by E. W. Garret; Dorothy's Dream, by Miss Wilkins, January, by M. E. B., and the Story of Chaucer's Griselda, with a full-page drawing by Lungren. The Chautauqua Readings cover a wide range of literature, history, science and art. $3.00 a year. D. Lothrop & Co., Publishers, Boston, Mass.

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In pleased surprise,
Looked on the artist sweetly;
Who, as he gazed,
Became amazed—
Bewildered, most completely.

For in his sight,
So fair and white,
She stood in mull and laces,
That she did seem
A painter's dream,
With ten-fold added graces.

With golden curls,
With teeth like pearls,
And cheeks like blushing roses,
She stood and smiled,
His Fancy's child,
Assuming perfect poses.

"Come in," he said,
And bowed his head
Before his fair ideal;
"Your wish, I pray?"
She heard him say,
And answered very real.

"I wish-te-he,
That you paint me?"
He gazed, amazed, but steady;
"I can't," he said,
(Her face was red),
"You're painted so already."

—S. T. OLEN.

Humorous.

A hard case—A watch's.

Outspoken—An open-air address.

What is that which nobody likes to have or to lose? A lawsuit.

When is a baggage wagon like a forest? When it is full of trunks.

How can a boy make his pants last? By making his coat and vest first.

Which newspapers are like delicate children? All those that are weekly.

What is it that must be taken from you before you get it? Your portrait.

Why is a postman in danger of losing his way? Because he is guided by the direction of strangers.

Why is a woman living up two pairs of stairs like a goddess? Why, because she is a second Flora.

Why is a married man like a candle? Because he sometimes goes out at night when he ought not to.

A live turkey would seem to be less noisy than a dead one—for one makes only a din, the other a dinner.

Marriage promotes longevity among men, notwithstanding its tendency to produce premature baldness.

A timid man kept a cocked revolver under his pillow, and the ear on which he usually slept is not there any more.

You can't always judge by outward appearance, remarked the fellow who took a drink of linseed oil from the gin bottle.

The true use of a porous plaster, according to a Milwaukee druggist, is "to retain the back in its proper place and let the pain crawl out of the holes."

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☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

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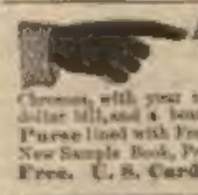

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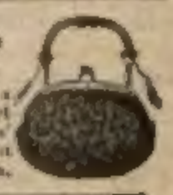

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE range of colors for stuffs is now immense, for just as a skilled artist can alter, modify and disguise the colors on his palette into a thousand other shades by judicious mixture, so our dyers soften, mix and combine shades to produce others which they call new, but which are close relations to other well-known friends.

Shopping for dress materials is becoming distracting work, as every new piece of material presented for our inspection appears to be a more beautiful shade than the last. Selection becomes terribly difficult, but it is consoling to think that when once removed from its lovely neighbors any of the shades of our chosen color will please us.

Indeed, it is the name more than the *color* which is new. For instance, the beautiful new vert-cresson is marvellously like the always pleasing and becoming moss-green which has long been fashionable.

The shape called Suede is only a newly-named mastic or chamois colour. Cendre-de-rose is supposed to be a new colour; certainly the name is new; it is a mixture of violet, pink and mauve, and is the counterpart of the heliotrope of two seasons back.

Bacchante is a softened delicate shade of the old color called wine-dregs, a rich, dark, brilliant red; dark blue is the rage.

Every shade that is brought out is more delicate and artistic than the others. Æsthetes have done so much for us that the full, coarser colors, lovely as they may be in nature, are found to be less beautiful and suitable for ladies' dresses. Scarlet is lovely as portrayed in berries, but who says a lady's cheeks should be scarlet, or her dress either?

It will be found in nature that very vivid colors are sparingly used, and couturieres should follow the same plan. It is not corn which is scarlet, but only the bright poppies about its roots. A red toilette is a mistake, although touches of red here and there are very effective.

And yet bright red, although not now worn out of doors, is still a favorite evening color, especially for middle-aged ladies. A large number of ball dresses for chaperones have been prepared of bright red velvet and broche combined.

They are handsome, because the styles and materials are good, but combined cresson velvet and mastic broche, or dark grenat velvet and pale blue broche, would be infinitely more elegant and ladylike.

This style of ball-dress has a plain skirt either of broche, brocade, or embroidered velvet or plush. The panels and long-pleated train are of velvet or broche, and the corsage is of velvet with plastron of broche or embroidery. The neck is cut oval, and the sleeves are replaced by a mere shoulder strap.

Young married ladies and young ladies of eighteen to five-and-twenty will refuse to wear trains at balls. They are certainly wise, as the train loses all its grace when held up in the hand.

Flounced skirts are fashionable, with flounces of lace or pinked-out faille, or with a single deep flounce softly pleated; plain skirts of silk are also worn, magnificently embroidered with pear designs and pendants.

A toilette prepared for a young matron of six-and-twenty is of Nile-blue velvet and cream satin embroidered with pearls. The whole front of the dress, skirt and corsage is of embroidered satin. The rest of the dress is a redingote tunic and corsage of Nile-blue velvet, the neck cut square in front, the sleeves just reaching the elbow. A high Medici collar and mousquetaire parements of the embroidered satin complete the toilette.

Delicious ball toilettes are made of crape and tulle, also of cream or white blonde. These are useful toilettes, especially the lace, as the skirts can be worn with polonaises of heavier material for soirees and dinner parties.

The draperies of such dresses are short, and the corsage has a long point back and front. Very little sleeve is worn, and the neck is cut low and oval, edged with a wide lace berthe or drapery of gauze.

Ladies devote more time to the composition of graceful and artistic reception toilettes than to all their other costumes put together. They like them simple in style, but rich in material, and all ardently seek an element of originality which will "strike" and gain the admiration of visitors.

A great deal of eccentricity is allowable, and even desirable, but it must be tempered with grace and elegance. A toilette of regal distinction for a lady of about five-and-forty is of ciselé black velvet with prune ottoman ground.

The dress is the princess form, cut up at each side to show a panel of prune velvet. The corsage has a full plastron of prune ottoman, the open neck encircled with a Medici collar of prune velvet. The back has two large box-pleats below the waist which develop into a long and graceful train.

The sleeve has two Zanetto puffs of ottoman at the elbow, separated by a band of prune velvet. The most charming detail of the costume is a large bayadere sash of Algerian silk, with many colored stripes and ball fringe.

This scarf starts from the back, under the dress; it passes through the side openings and ties on the tablier, the two long ends nearly reaching the ground.

A lovely princess dress for a younger lady is of ancient brocade, with water-green ground embroidered with roses in natural colors. The neck is open *en cœur*, and is edged with a large Robespierre collar of moss-green velvet. A scarf of velvet encircles the waist and ties on the left, tipped with bead fringe.

A graceful and original scarf of lace passes beneath the collar and crosses on the bust with a jewel; it is secured with a jewelled clasp at the waist, and falls in two ends on the front of the dress, where they are hooked together to form a tablier.

These scarves are a new and special feature in reception toilettes. They are of surpassing elegance, but they need to be arranged by an able hand; everything depends upon the method of draping.

The dog-collar, a substitute for ordinary necklaces, is a detail of evening dress which must not be forgotten. It is a great boon for ladies who do not possess much jewelry, as, although they frequently consist of rows of real pearls or diamond stars sewn upon satin or velvet, yet more frequently they are made with strings of coral or ordinary beads.

The width varies according to the length of the neck, but as much as possible the number of bead rows should be uneven, and the beads should not be too large.

The roling chapeaux are of tasteful coloring and form, but they are rather too high for grace, especially as this height is obtained principally by trimmings. The crowns are inclined to be high and conical.

But the fashionable shape is the Halberdier hat in the pure Henri II. style, which is very different from the flat-brimmed hats known by that name.

The crown resembles the tall, dome-shaped, iron casques worn by the halberdiers of that time, inclined to lean forward and slightly overhanging in front. This is a favorite form for the cloth hats which are superseding felt to a considerable extent.

The cause of this is the fashion that the chapeau must match the shade of the dress in *toilettes de genre*. It is impossible to absolutely match all fabrics in felt, as the range of colors is too limited in that material. The cloth is tightly stretched upon a buckram shape and can hardly be distinguished from felt.

The Halberdier hat, is in brick-red cloth and velvet to match. The crown is covered with velvet, but the brim is of cloth, tightly stretched to look like felt, and edged with a very narrow gold cord which ties at the back.

The only trimming is a large bow of moss-green velvet in front, which continues over the open brim and forms a second bow touching the hair. Gold pins are placed here and there on the hat. This is a very original model.

Fireside Chat.

HOME CONTRIVANCES.

THE first thing I set to in my little room was the polishing of old furniture, with black enamel paint. I covered three or four little tables with it, and put some rings of gold round the legs.

On one little gipsy teapot (after being varnished in the same way) I placed some dried ferns in a circle, and the next day I covered these ferns with gold paint.

This proved such a success that I tried the same experiment on a small glass bookcase, which now looks like a Japanese cabinet. The ferns should be laid on before the varnish dries, as it is very troublesome to paste them on afterwards.

There is also another style of ornamenting articles in the same way as the above, which is done by placing the gilded surface of the ferns downwards, putting a weight on it: and after a time, when the fern is removed, the impression will be left on the varnish. However, I did not find this such a success as the other method.

I had rather a large collection of birds' eggs, and of these I made quite a pretty ornament. In a flat card-board box (such as milliners send dresses home in) I arranged bits of moss and twigs of lichen, and on the latter I placed little nests, each containing three or four birds' eggs.

To the nests were affixed tiny pieces of card-board, with the name of the bird to which the eggs belonged, and also when taken, and on what date.

The box should be painted over with the black enamel paint, and placed on a table against the wall, and the front covered with a piece of glass, the size of the box, so that the eggs can be seen.

Amongst the moss and lichen I placed bags of camphor; but better than this, if the eggs are washed with a lather of arsenical soap, it will prevent insects from attacking them.

I had still a few small eggs left, which I thought would not be seen in the box, so I hunted up a wooden bread platter from a lot of rubbish, and I painted it over with some light green paint (the black enamel paint will do quite as well), bored a hole in the centre, and placed a little tree composed of a few dried twigs in it.

This tree I made myself, by tying on tiny branches from a rose bush, with either black or brown cotton, dotting them here and there with pieces of lichen and moss, and then placing nests between the boughs, with a few eggs in each.

This should be covered with a glass shade, but I had no shade, and the ornament did not look amiss without one.

Some curious Japanese saucers I had, were hung up on the walls of my little room, affixed to shields of red baize.

I first cut out the cloth in shape of a shield, and then bordered it all round with some scallops edged with yellow crewels.

A few leaden crisping hair pins, bent to the shape of hooks, will do to support the saucers on the shields, and then these can either be hung up or nailed to the wall.

A pair of old plaster of Paris brackets, that were brown with age and dust, looked like ebony and gold, after being painted over with the never-failing remedy—black enamel paint,—and then regilded here and there.

Wicker-work wall-baskets for holding flowers will look very pretty if covered with dry moss and lichen, and dotted with tiny shells.

In two corners of my room I had little wooden brackets made of a common piece of wood each (which was cut to fit the corners), and covered with red baize, having also a valance of the same. On each of these I placed a stone china jar (one of those in which ginger is sold), and having previously got some funny black pictures, I affixed them to the jar, and the result was satisfactory, for they looked like black china figures. M. S.

Cranberry Sauce.—Put the berries, after carefully picking out defective ones, into a kettle with just water enough to prevent burning, and stew until the whole becomes a homogeneous mass, with no semblance of whole berries, stirring all the time, and then add the clarified syrup previously prepared, and stir a few minutes while boiling. The syrup is made by allowing a quart of water to three pounds of sugar. Allow equal weights of fruit and sugar.

Plum Pudding.—One pound and a half of fine layer raisins, stoned and cut up; one pound of golden brown sugar; one pound of grated bread-crumbs; a quarter of a pound of butter; half a cup of cream and ten eggs. Beat the yolks very light, and mix in the sugar; sprinkle the raisins with a quarter of a teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda, and flour the raisins well by sifting; rub the butter and cream together, adding them to the eggs and sugar; then beat in the crumbs, and add the whites; beat, and last of all stir in the raisins, and pour the batter into a cloth dipped in hot water and covered with flour. Leave room in tying for the swelling of the pudding.

Mutton Stew.—To two pounds of the cooked meat cold put one spoonful of currant jelly—or, if you have no jelly at hand, brown sugar instead; two tablespoonfuls of butter, two tablespoonfuls of walnut catsup, pepper and salt to taste, with a dash of whatever spices you fancy, or none at all, if your taste leads you to prefer simple food. This stew resembles venison in taste, but as some persons dislike any sweet taste about their meat, the currant jelly may be dispensed with. Celery salt is a modern acquisition to the list of condiments for made dishes that may well be called in to help in such a case. Curry powder, too, may be appealed to, but in moderation, where most Americans are concerned.

Chicken Salad.—Have cold roasted or boiled chicken free of skin, fat and bones. Place on a board and cut in long, thin strips, and cut these into dice. Place in an earthen bowl (there should be two quarts) and season with four tablespoonfuls of vinegar, two of oil, one teaspoonful of salt, and one-half teaspoonful of pepper. Set away in a cold place for two or three hours. Scrape and wash enough of the tender white celery to make one quart. Cut this with a sharp knife in pieces about half an inch thick. Put these in the ice-chest until serving time. Make the mayonnaise dressing. Mix the chicken and the celery together and add half of the dressing. Arrange in a salad-bowl or on a flat dish and pour the remainder of the dressing over it. Garnish with white celery leaves. Or have a jelly border and arrange the salad in this. Half celery and half lettuce is often used for chicken salad. If, when the chicken or fowl is cooked, it is allowed to cool in the water in which it is boiled, it will be juicier and tenderer than if taken from the water as soon as done.

THE times, it would seem, are harder than they really appear, when the burglar fraternity takes to stealing tombstones from graveyards, as was done in New York a week or so ago.

Correspondence.

W. B. S.—The volcano Hecla is in Iceland.

M. J. F.—Consult a respectable medical man.

W. I. P.—We think it very wise in you to consult the lady's parents.

COLIN F.—A horse is said to be "aged" after it has arrived at the age of six years.

READER.—"Mugwump" was an Indian title, equivalent to our "Duke" or "Great Chief."

A. M. N. A.—Rosamond means "rose of the world," Ellen "fruitful," George "a tiller of the soil."

INQUIRER.—There is in strictness no such single word as Scotchman: it should be Scotsman, of Scot.

SUE.—A silhouette is made by tracing with pen or pencil the outline of a profile projected by a candle or lamp upon a sheet of white paper. The space within the outline is then filled in with black. The same effect can be produced by sketching a profile upon black paper and then cutting it out.

CONNIE.—We do not think that you have any cause of complaint. Endeavor to be contented, and make yourself so agreeable when you call upon the young lady that she will desire more frequent visits. You are so young that we think that the lady shows a good deal of wisdom in her conduct.

FLOSSIE.—If you chose to repeat what you were told in confidence, and which you had no means of discovering the truth of, you must take the consequences. It is unfortunate for you that it was all false, and your intentions may have been good, but you should remember that a certain place is paved with good intentions.

J. C. J.—Olla podrida is a Spanish national dish, consisting of several kinds of meat cut up into small pieces, and stewed with a variety of vegetables. This dish is a great favorite with the poor, and is kept so long that the odor and flavor become highly offensive. It is commonly used, like pot pourri, metaphorically to denote a medley.

A. F. F.—By the deed being "duly executed" is meant that it was signed, sealed, and delivered by the parties, or party, as their or his or her act and deed in presence of witnesses. Execution is also applied to the possession taken by the sheriff's officer after judgment, and to the depriving of a person guilty of a capital offense of his or her life.

DISPUTE.—Creasy counts fifteen "decisive battles" in the world's history: Marathon, 490 B. C.; Syracuse, 413; Arbela, 331; Metaurus, 207; the Roman defeat by Varus, 9 A. D.; Chalons, 451; Tours, 732; Hastings, 1066; Joan of Arc at Orleans, 1429; the Armada, 1588; Blenheim, 1704; Pultowa, 1709; Saratoga, 1777; Valmy, 1792, and Waterloo 1815.

AMOS.—Grease a plate with lard, and set it where ants congregate; place a few bits of wood so the ants can climb on the plate easily; they will forsake any food for lard; when the plate is well covered with them, turn it over a hot fire of coals, they will drop into the fire, and you can then re-set the plate for another catch. A few repetitions will clean them out.

L. K.—A young man should not marry until he is of age, and possesses sufficient to maintain a family in comfort. One year does not make any material difference, and it would be better to postpone your marriage until you are twenty-two. It is better for the man to be the elder, but, provided the lady is not more than a year or so older, it does not matter very much.

LILLY.—Leave your complexion to nature. Lead a regular life, take plenty of exercise, eat plenty of simple wholesome food, avoid stimulants, and you will never require the injurious nostrums so extensively advertised as certain to produce a perfectly clear skin. You do not want a "perfectly clear" skin, you want a perfectly healthy one, and that can never be obtained by powder, paint, wash, or cosmetic.

AMY.—Make it up with your old schoolfellow. Life is too short for permanent estrangements to be brought about by such trivial matters. If your friend will not give way do you be the first to hold out the "olive branch." There will be no loss of dignity, and much pain may be saved. Nothing in this world is gained by pride or obstinacy, and the old saying that in social affairs a spoonful of oil is worth a pint of vinegar, is well worthy of recollection.

ADDIE.—A morganatic marriage is the term for a marriage concluded between a man of superior and a woman of inferior rank, in which it is stipulated that the latter and her children shall be entitled neither to the rank nor to the possessions of the husband, the dowry being in lieu of all other privileges. Marriages of the kind are not infrequent in the princely houses of Germany, and one of the most noted was that of King Frederick William III., of Prussia with the Countess Auguste von Harrach, who thereupon received the title of Princess of Liegnitz.

C. M.—The agent which tarnishes silver is sulphureted hydrogen. This is present in impure coal-gas, is given off by burning coal, and usually occurs to some extent in the air of large cities. Sulphur is present in eggs and chlorine in salt, and both of these tarnish silver. To protect silver vessels and to use wrap them in paper saturated with wax, or in paper painted with white lead, or in chamois leather. A linen rag moistened with ammonia water will remove tarnish. When in bad state wash in a strong lather of yellow soap and boiling water, and then rub with a paste of hartshorn powder (not quicksilver powder) and alcohol.

C. L. G.—Nails are usually divided into cut nails, so called because they are cut out of iron plates, and wrought nails, which are made from wrought iron. Different kinds are named from their shape, uses, etc., as shingle, trunk, and harness nails, and tacks, brads, and spikes. Some are called also fourpenny, sixpenny, eightpenny, and tenpenny nails. The word penny, thus used, is supposed to have been changed from pound. A six-pound nail was one of which it took a thousand to make six-pounds, an eight-pound nail one of which it took a thousand to eight pounds, etc. So a six-pound nail soon came to be called a sixpenny nail, and the same with the other sizes.